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THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

The Laurence Olivier *Hamlet*

Current Fashions in *Hamlet* Criticism

Hamlet's "All But Blunted Purpose"

Horatio's Hamlet

VOLUME XXIV JANUARY, 1949

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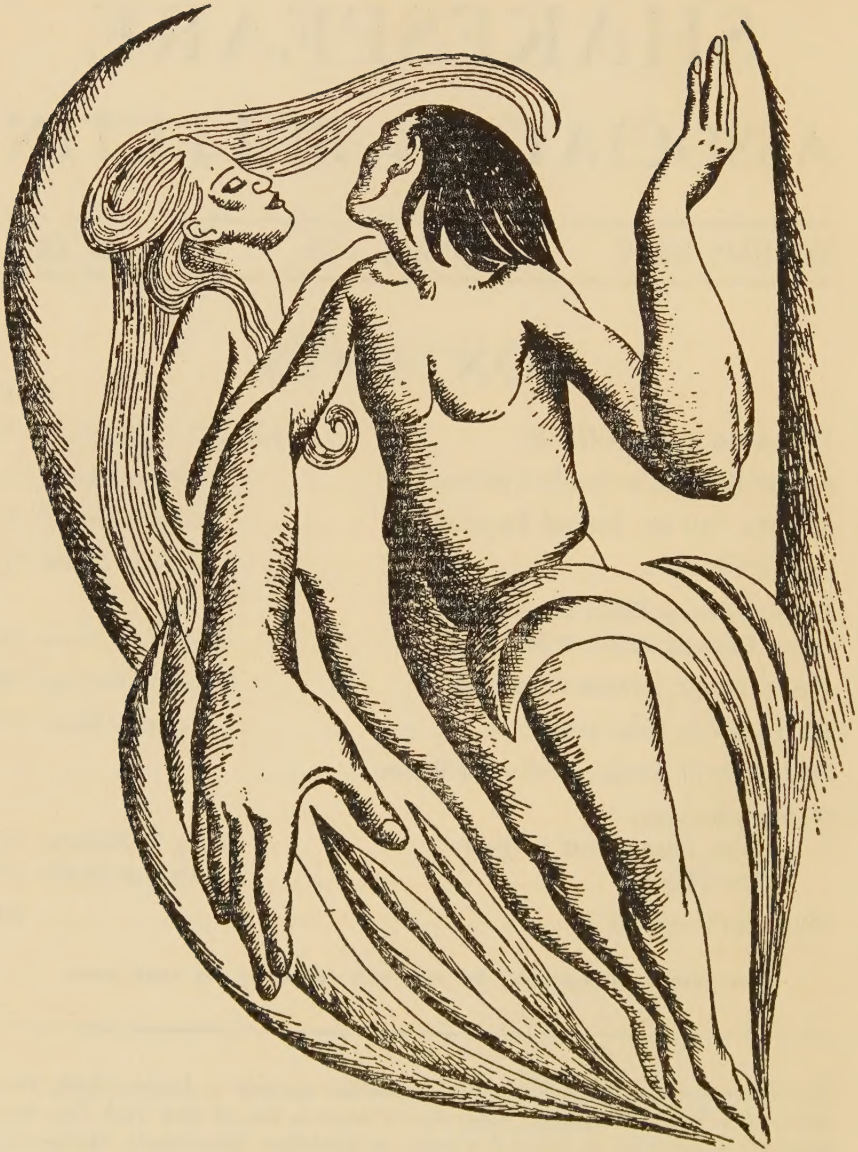

ILLUSTRATION BY F. ROBERTS JOHNSON FOR THE VISION PRESS, LTD.,
EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE'S *Hamlet*

THE LAURENCE OLIVIER *HAMLET*

By James G. McManaway

THE long awaited *Hamlet* of Sir Laurence Olivier is an exciting picture. Done in black and white, as befits the somber story, it has not the color and glamor that made *Henry V* so popular. Its appeal is not the pageantry of medieval warfare, but the thrill of action and the verbal music of Shakespeare's most quotable lines. In photography, direction and acting the picture sets standards that are equalled perhaps once in a decade. Millions of people are going to be deeply moved by the tragic fate of a young Prince so gallant and so brilliantly intelligent that many a maid will see him in her mind's eye 'twixt sleeping and waking.

From lowest to highest, the members of the cast have been carefully chosen for their physical and histrionic qualifications for the assigned role. As producer and star performer, Olivier has a double responsibility which he discharges in such a manner as to establish him as one of the great directors and Shakespearian actors of this age. His lines are read with beauty and intelligence, and in his gestures he shows constant awareness of Hamlet's own injunction to "suit the action to the word, the word to the action." (Two questions do arise in the mind, however; the first is about Hamlet's conduct at each appearance of the Ghost—is it necessary, or fitting, that he should almost faint with shock? The second relates to the dubious advantage of suggesting the existence of an Oedipus complex by having Hamlet and his mother exchange unnaturally ardent kisses.) I like particularly a novel device utilized in the soliloquies. In "To be or not to be," for example, the actor's lips are motionless at the start, though we hear the lines in Olivier's familiar voice. But as the thoughts become more excited and the passions more intense, Hamlet breaks into tem-

pestuous speech. This is an effect impossible on the stage, but very lifelike.

Norman Wooland is a splendid Horatio, and Basil Sydney and Felix Aylmer are almost equally good as Claudius and Polonius. Terence Morgan does an interesting job with Laertes, who in his hands grows from a fop into a considerable, though not an admirable, man, despite the fact that in this version he is denied the big scene in which he storms the palace. Miss Eileen Herlie's only imperfection as the Queen is her too youthful appearance. Although this makes more credible her seduction by Claudius in the lifetime of Hamlet Senior and also Hamlet's almost unnatural affection for her, it challenges belief that she could be the mother of a thirty year old son — as she is. Opinions differ sharply about Miss Jean Simmons's Ophelia. In the early scene with Polonius and Laertes, she manifests a pretty independence and a flash of humor that are quite out of keeping with everything else that happens. Is it worth misleading the audience about her personality for the sake of a brief comic effect? It seems to me that Ophelia is thrown about too brutally in some scenes, but her performance in the Mad Scene pleases me, as she drifts in and out of the action with her snatches of song and her almost lucid moments. (The business of the drowning is photographically pretty, but wholly unrealistic.)

To many thousands who have never seen a Shakespearian play on the stage, and to those others who see one all too rarely, the picture will give form and substance to passages that have previously been known only for their poetic beauty and to scenes, that, without stage business and passionate action, may have seemed "words, words, words." How many of those who have had to memorize the adages that Polonius heaps on Laertes have realized how pitifully comic he can be, or guessed how easy it was for Hamlet to fool him to the top of his bent? Where else has one ever seen so pulse-quickening a duel? Or watched a seeming-innocent Queen brought so devastatingly face to face with the consequences of her sensuality? Absorbed in the conflict of passions, most audiences will scarcely be aware that they are listening to blank verse, so natural is the dialogue and so sensitive is the reading of the lines. People who have not read *Hamlet* since school or college days are going to take the play off

the shelf and read it again, with keener and more informed pleasure.

Not that the picture tells the full *Hamlet* story. A thoughtful reading of the play will reveal a Prince infinitely more complex than the man of action portrayed in the picture. Confronted by a text that is far too long to be acted in two and three quarter hours, Sir Laurence, the actor and producer, and Alan Dent, the textual editor, have had to cut and slash and transpose scenes or passages, as have all the producers of *Hamlet* since Shakespeare's own day. (There was one notable exception, the producer of the five-hour *Hamlet* in which Maurice Evans starred several years ago.)

The decision in this case was to simplify the story and present the fable bare, except for such literary adornment as could be retained within the allotted time of performance. Audiences which meet Hamlet for the first time in this picture will be puzzled by such phrases as "the melancholy Dane" and by such references as they may have heard to a sensitive soul charged with a burden too heavy for it to bear; and certainly it would not occur to them, without the picture's explicit warning, that this is the tragedy of a man who could not make up his mind—as a matter of fact, most people will discover nothing in the picture to substantiate the warning.

As the literature distributed in the playhouse freely admits, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is a richer, more complex fabric than that shown on the screen. Gone is the ghost lore of the Elizabethans (of which, more will be said later), and with it has gone the justification for the Mouse Trap play. For if Hamlet does not have to decide whether it is an honest Ghost, he does not need to authenticate its story by catching the conscience of the King. And we who watch the screen cannot, as in reading the play, suffer with him the doubts that rack his spirit while he seeks confirmation of the ghostly disclosures.

On three important occasions Shakespeare holds up to Hamlet—and to us—the normal conduct of people in Hamlet's circumstances; and three times Hamlet—and we—see how far short the Prince falls. The drastic cutting of Hamlet's scene with the players robs us of the account of the death of Priam, which introduces the

first of these important mirror scenes. Now the stylized verse in which this narrative is written may seem objectionable or even comic to a modern audience, but its rendition was intended to be done with such simulated passion that, considering his own genuine cause of grief, Hamlet must burst out in admiration and self-reproach

> that this Player here
> But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
> Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
> That from her working all his visage wann'd;
> Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect
> . . . And all for nothing,
> For Hecuba.
> What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
> That he should weep for her? What would he do
> Had he the motive and that cause for passion
> That I have?

The player's speech and Hamlet's soliloquy ("O what a rogue and peasant slave am I") focus attention upon Hamlet's delay and at the same time acquaint us with an adequate reason:

> The spirit that I have seen
> May be a Devil, and the Devil hath power
> T'assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps,
> Out of my weakness, and my melancholy, . . .
> Abuses me to damn me.

To verify the accusation of the Ghost, he will probe Claudius to the quick with the Mouse Trap play.

A second time Shakespeare holds the mirror up to Hamlet in the scene in which the Prince questions the Captain about the identity and the military objectives of the Army of Fortinbras,

a delicate and tender Prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event . . . .
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg shell . . .
. . . for a plot . . .
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain.

And once more self-reproachful, ("How all occasions do inform against me!") Hamlet asks,

How stand I then
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd?

And once again he dedicates himself to revenge.

The third important norm which Shakespeare provides is in the conduct of Laertes, when he returns to Denmark after his father's death. In the mistaken belief that King Claudius is directly to blame, he raises rebellion and storms the royal palace. This Hamlet does not know at the time, for he has been shipped off to England, but he recognizes the parallel when he next meets Laertes—

by the image of my cause I see,
The portraiture of his.

Thus the audience is reminded of what a virtuous and valiant son is expected to do for a father slain.

All three of these incidents are cancelled from the script of the picture. And in consequence the spectators are scarcely aware that delay occurs between the Ghost's revelation of the truth and the Mouse Trap scene. The deletion of the three incidents, and especially of the famous soliloquies which conclude the first and second, not only speeds the action but simplifies the character of Prince Hamlet. There is hardly a suggestion of that melancholy and disillusionment which paralyses action. And all question of the "honesty" of the Ghost is gone.

The doubts about the Ghost are not merely a reflection of Elizabethan speculations about Ghosts, of interest only to the antiquarian.

Shakespeare's contemporaries held strong and conflicting opinions on the subject, and we are intended to understand these various points of view and to sympathize with Hamlet's necessity to resolve his doubts before he risks Hell and Damnation by the impious and rebellious killing of his King.

Some Elizabethans believed (a) that ghosts were illusions of a disordered brain. In the first scene Marcellus cites the opinion of the learned Horatio: " 'tis but our fantasie"; and in the Closet Scene, Gertrude tells Hamlet, "This is the very coinage of your brain"; and he replies, "My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time, And makes as healthfull music; it is not madnes That I have uttered, Bring me to the test." Others thought (b) that the Devil caused evil spirits to assume the appearance of the dead in order to tempt the living to a mortal crime: "The spirit that I have seene May be a Devil," says Hamlet, "and perhaps . . . Abuses me to damn me." And a third attitude (c) was that Ghosts were genuine and had returned to earth to ask a benefit, to disclose a threat to their country, or to reveal the location of buried treasure (see Horatio's speech, I. i. 130ff.; and Hamlet's decision after the Mouse Trap play, "O good Horatio, I'll take the Ghost's word for a thousand pound"). At one time or other all of these opinions are expressed in the play, and but for the doubts in Hamlet's mind he might have driven to his revenge without recourse to a play wherein to catch the conscience of the King. Granted that these opinions are not now current and that the deletion of them from the script makes comprehension of the picture easier for a modern audience, yet there is a loss in motivation. As things stand in the picture, the presentation in the Danish Court of a play, of this play, *The Murder of Gonzago*, is a casual accident, not an essential part of the warp and woof of the story. Indeed, the lines are cut so drastically at this point that a spectator who did not know the complete story would find it difficult to understand why a play is given at all and would be bewildered by the couplet Olivier shouts as he dashes wildly across the presence chamber,

> The play's the thing
> Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

How much easier to comprehend, if we had been permitted to hear Hamlet confide to Horatio:

> Observe mine uncle! If his occulted guilt
> Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
> It is a damned ghost that we have seen.

It may be noted also that Hamlet's disappointment at the loss of the crown to his wily uncle ("popped in between me and the election") is soft-pedaled in the picture. In consequence, we fail to detect the menace in Claudius's determination to keep Hamlet at court under close observation instead of letting him return to Wittenberg; we are puzzled by the King's refusal to believe that Hamlet's extraordinary conduct, his "madness," is the product of disappointed love; for Claudius did suspect that his popular nephew was ambitious.

Shakespeare had two purposes in introducing Fortinbras into his play. One of these, his serving as a foil to Hamlet, has already been noted. The other purpose was to provide political continuity for Denmark. Fortinbras was so eminently eligible to succeed to the throne that Hamlet devotes some of his dying words to the prophecy that the election will go to him. Englishmen who in the bitter Wars of the Roses had learned the value of a peaceful succession to the crown found comfort and also esthetic satisfaction in the knowledge that the future of the state was secure. And the presence of Prince Fortinbras, who arrives in the nick of time to assume control of affairs and to assure that the dead Hamlet would not leave behind a maimed reputation, is an essential part of the tragic catharsis. We who live in a different tradition do not have this feeling about the continuity of the state, and so the omission of Fortinbras does not trouble us. It is interesting to note that as early as the time of Dryden producers were omitting Fortinbras and giving Horatio the closing speeches, as in this picture.

Along with Fortinbras, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are omitted from the picture, and with them goes some of the sardonic humor of the play—the incident of the recorders; their death in

England—and part of the evidence that Claudius is a "mighty opposite," deadly in his scheming.

In a word, much of the complexity and subtlety of Hamlet's character has been edited out of the script, along with much of the richness and complexity of the story. What remains is magnificent action and splendid poetry, but this is not all of Shakespeare's *Hamlet.*

It must have grieved the producer and the textual editor to sacrifice the scenes and the great speeches that I have referred to. They call the picture a study in *Hamlet*; and so it is. I hope that they will in time resume the study and produce a still greater picture for a public that this present picture will have helped prepare to acclaim it.

Meanwhile, teachers of the play will profit by the opportunity afforded them to build on the nation-wide familiarity with the picture and to reveal to their classes some of the beauties of the play which are almost unavoidably cut in performance. Now that Hamlet has come alive for the millions, teachers will find it easier to reveal that this gallant Prince, whose mouth is filled with glorious verse, does indeed have "the courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword," that he is truly "th' expectancy, and rose of the fair state," and that "he was likely, had he been put on, To have proved most royally."

The transfer of the play from the stage, where acts and scenes are plainly divided by an empty stage or a falling curtain, to the screen, where no such conventions exist, makes it possible to suggest that the action is continuous. And this effect is heightened by the trick of concluding the business of one group of characters and then moving the camera along the endless corridors of the Palace in search of the next group. Soon the audience forgets the structural members of the play (acts and scenes) and concentrates on the spectacle of uninterrupted action. Each event seems to follow on the heels of the one before it, and it is with a sense of shock that we hear Ophelia speak of "twice two months" in the Mouse Trap scene—until that instant we had thought that only a day or two had passed since Horatio first saw the Ghost. This trick of direction and photography has the incidental effect of removing almost every sugges-

tion of delay on Hamlet's part. It should be observed, however, that as the picture progresses, the illusion of continuous action is not consistently maintained. We move abruptly from one group to another, with fewer of the photographic transitions.

There are one or two technical flaws. The sound effects which have been dubbed in whenever the Ghost appears are so loud and confusing that the Ghost's lines are hard to understand. And the all-important crowing of the cock, which hastens the Ghost back to the grave, and which is specifically mentioned by Horatio, is never heard at all in the din of the sound track. And the camera must be charged with several sins. It moves about too much during the play within the play, making it difficult for the audience to watch Hamlet and Horatio as they search Claudius's face for signs of guilt. There is too much "atmosphere," too much fog, too many stairs. To this reviewer, at least, there is from time to time an unwelcome intrusion of photographic symbolism in a story to which it is foreign and which does not need it. What is in the text to warrant the focussing of the camera on an empty chair, a bed, a winding stair leading to a lonely platform? This alien attempt at symbolism is surely the only excuse for the long procession with Hamlet's body to the remote and lofty platform. Why take it there? Not for burial; not for exposure to the public eye; not, as required by the text, that someone may display it to the Danish public which had loved the Prince and acquaint them with the cause of the tragic events. The highest point in the picture is Horatio's speech that ends the play:

> Good night, sweet prince,
> And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

And as the camera moves behind the chair in which rests Hamlet's corpse, the picture should black out, as quietly, as simply, as Horatio's benediction.

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CURRENT FASHIONS IN HAMLET CRITICISM

By Robert M. Smith

IT is inconceivable that Shakespeare's most popular tragedy should escape the current fashions of literary criticism. Possibly a review of these may serve to reveal how Shakespeare's *Hamlet* continues to mirror not only contending schools of criticism, but new patterns of meaning for our times.

Three fashions of Hamlet criticism are popular at the present writing: the *Historical*, the *Psycho-analytic,* and the *Impressionistic* or *Symbolist.*

THE HISTORICAL SCHOOL

In *A History of Hamlet Criticism* (1601-1821),[1] Professor Paul S. Conklin traces the trends of opinion from the first appearance of the play upon the stage and in print through the first quarter of the Nineteenth Century. A loyal pupil of Stoll's training in *Historical* criticism, he bends every effort in his survey to demonstrate that there is one "orthodox" Hamlet, which everyone presumably must accept, or else be regarded as an unhistoric, idle, and vain babbler, namely, the Hamlet of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century up to 1770. This Hamlet, rooted in early stage tradition, is a malcontent Kydian avenger, a strong, eloquent, heroic prince, rather than as the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth depicted him, an unheroic dreamer, consumed with melancholy, who allowed his "native hue of resolution" to be "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." Steele reported in 1709 that Betterton played the part as "a young man of great expectation, vivacity, and enterprise."

Professor Conklin is troubled by the profusion of comments by Hanmer, some of them with historical perspective, others "hope-

lessly absolute" (p. 56); yet wishing to include Hanmer as, on the whole, sound and orthodox, he rather lamely concludes: "However it is reasonable to believe that Hanmer's real Hamlet was most likely the heroical youth." Guthrie and Goldsmith are censured for comments of a hopeless "literary" nature, a tendency which ripened into the "New Hamlet" of William Richardson foreshadowed by Francis Gentleman.

In 1774 Richardson wrote *A Philosophical Analysis of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters,* an approach that involves definite "psychologizing,"—and presents an unfortunate prince paralysed by conflicting emotions, held back by moral scruples from avenging his father. Goethe, in *Wilhelm Meister,* sentimentalizes Hamlet still further, and Mackenzie and Robertson add discoveries of diversity in Hamlet, so that he becomes "a strange new psychologized figure" (p. 76). Edmund Malone, however, was not infected by these romantic heresies, nor was the actor, John Philip Kemble. It was, however, a far different critical instinct that dominated at the end of the century; for then one particular brand of undramatic, unhistorical criticism gained the ascendency and produced the "New Hamlet."

Turning for a glance at French and German criticism, Professor Conklin stresses Voltaire's tirade against the barbarity and indecorum of *Hamlet,* and the treatment of Goethe who, in spite of his great critical gifts, gave "an absolute and unhistorical interpretation, bearing the limitations that must follow in the wake of all such flagrant impressionism."

During the years in England from 1820-21 the literary remarks of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, and Hunt gave full expression to the Romantic Hamlet—paradoxically above all acting genius on the stage—interpretations that worry Professor Conklin because in his opinion they threaten the artistic and histrionic integrity of the play.

Granted all the truth of Professor Conklin's conscientious historical survey, we may regret that his book is conceived and written in so partisan a spirit for the purpose of establishing an orthodox Ham-

let—or the "right" Hamlet—the Hamlet of historical tradition. In inveighing against "the personal estimate" or impressionism, he is unaware that "the historic estimate" is not necessarily, as Matthew Arnold pointed out, "the right estimate." Disclaiming against a Romantic absolute, Professor Conklin embraces another, the absolute of Historical Relativism. Since the orthodox Hamlet is the 17th Century avenger and malcontent, must we hereafter dispense with the insights and the riches of Coleridge and of Goethe, of Hazlitt and of Lamb, of Bradley and Adams and all readers persuaded by the text that Hamlet discloses an inner life as vivid, compelling, and enthralling as his outward life? That is what Hamlet said about himself:

> I have that within which passeth show
> These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

Moreover, the Hamlet of inner problems and conflicts cannot be minimized, nor ignored, without doing violence to the text. It is easy to interpret Hamlet as an heroic and intrepid prince, a man of action rather than of thought, if we reject the full meaning of Hamlet's soliloquies; and it is in discussion of the soliloquies that Professor Conklin's study is bare and inadequate. We dare not slight these when we realize, as we should, that it was not Richardson, nor Coleridge and the Romantics, but Shakespeare who created Hamlet as a man of moody reflection repeatedly upbraiding himself. It was Shakespeare, too, not Coleridge, who wrote the soliloquies and for the specific dramatic purpose, among other purposes, of giving adequate motive for Hamlet's delay. He wonderfully made the repeated delays convincing by introducing the numerous self-reflecting and reproachful soliloquies in which Hamlet calls himself:

> A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
> Like, John-a-Dreams, unpregnant of my cause.

Furthermore, in the interchange with his father's Ghost in Act III Hamlet acknowledges his tardiness and foresees that the Ghost has returned to whet his almost blunted purpose. The Historical School, however, continues to maintain that there is no delay from inner difficulties, that Hamlet strikes in time, but Hamlet knew better than they; for what he says about his repeated procrastination and his

inabilities to explain it refute every contention that Hamlet's difficulties are wholly external.

So it turns out in fact that the Romantic point of view must also have been historically Shakespeare's. Shakespeare presented not a truncated Kydian man of action—but a comprehensive human being, a splendid prince, indeed, but full of inner perplexities. It is these very traits which the Historical School discards, that have endeared Hamlet to countless readers and spectators. Why should we trim him down to a mere "heroic figure"; why insist that the early historic stage presentation is the only "right" point of view? Though such attempts may have thrown Bradley into "the dark backward and abysm of time," they have not prevailed to the exclusion of other points of view.

Certainly no one who has seen Maurice Evans's full length rendition or his abbreviated G.I. *Hamlet* will have any doubts that the play is the most enthralling melodrama ever written for the stage. It fails, however, as does Sir Laurence Olivier's screen version, by reducing or eliminating the reflective and philosophical sides of Hamlet. As Dr. McManaway says, Sir Laurence Olivier fails to reveal his thesis that Hamlet is "a man who could not make up his mind." By curtailing or omitting the soliloquies we have just what the Historical School wishes—merely a melodramatic, heroic prince, but that was not the way Shakespeare wrote the play, or conceived the character of Hamlet, nor will such presentation satisfy for long an audience of Hamlet lovers. Granted that the G.I. *Hamlet* of Maurice Evans is wonderful theatre, who would forego, if he could, the Hamlet of Edwin Booth? Who would not go to see again Forbes Robertson or John Gielgud playing the whole Hamlet, or John Barrymore?

The Historical School prides itself on its "objectivity," in opposition to the "subjectivity" of the Romantics. For example, Professor Draper entitles his ambitious and thorough study, *The Hamlet of Shakespeare's Audience* (1938); he throws valuable light by reinterpreting the characters in the light of Elizabethan psychological and social traditions and conventions, and resorts to a multitude of contemporary books to illustrate them. His assumption, however, is that there is such a pattern as the Elizabethan mind. What we have.

of course, is Professor Draper's conception of the Elizabethan mind.

Louise C. Turner Forest in an equally learned and penetrating essay sounds a *Caveat for Critics Invoking Elizabethan Psychology* which is worth recalling to those of us reared in the Historical School:

> Elizabethan popular psychology was simply every man's private synthesis of observations of human behaviour understood in the light of whatever selections from whatever authorities appealed to him and, therefore, the overminute studies of our modern historical critics miss the truth by too-ingenious learning, and in their too-precise analysis ignore the actual Elizabethan situation and practice; and on the other hand, by oversimplifying and disregarding the very serious contrarieties in it, have missed the real nature of the thing they were investigating, have come to quite wrong conclusions about it and have presented us with an Elizabethan psychology that never existed. . . . Indeed, so much erudite nonsense has been talked about "Elizabethan psychology" in the last quarter of a century that it has come to seem either mortal ignorance or scholarly apostasy to challenge it. We may no longer read the Elizabethans and Jacobeans for their plain poetical meanings; any phrase that speaks, however faulty, of souls and deeds, or of thoughts and feelings, we must interpret literally in terms of a mastered sixteenth century jargon.[2]

These dubious simplifications of Elizabethan psychology and social convention also turn out to be "Subjectivist."

The chief flaw, however, in the historical method is a failure to realize that Shakespeare as a poetic genius and dramatic artist was not merely a mouthpiece of contemporary fashion, but drew upon his own imaginative understanding of human life and rewove everything he derived into his own incomparable patterns. These patterns the Psychoanalytic and the Symbolist Schools attempt to reveal.

II

THE PSYCHOANALYTIC SCHOOL

What G. W. Stonier in his article "The Dark Passage" *(The New Statesman* and *The Nation,* December 6, 1947) terms the most

influential school of Hamlet criticism since Bradley's, appeared in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) which was elaborated by his disciple, Dr. Ernest Jones, in his noted essay, "The Problem of Hamlet and the Oedipus Complex." The main theme of Hamlet, according to these psychoanalysts, is a highly elaborated and disguised account of a boy's love for his mother and consequent jealousy of and hatred towards his uncle. Hamlet, because he has a mother fixation, cannot fulfill the Ghost's command to kill Claudius, because the murder was a deed Hamlet himself had long harbored in his unconscious. The undertone of his feeling is built on an inner identification with an envy of his uncle's deeds, as revealed in his words, "unpregnant of my cause."

Dr. Jones's essay has now been made generally available in the first volume of the *Vision* series (1947), which contains a reprint of the Hamlet text with modern drawings by F. Roberts Johnson. Four of them, by kind permission of R. P. Friedman, are reproduced in this issue of the Bulletin with comments by the artist and poet, Cloyd M. Criswell. They "breathe out the sombre menace of the tragedy, 'the very witching time of night'."

Dr. Frederic Wertham, Senior Psychiatrist in the New York Hospitals, in a contribution entitled "The Matricidal Impulse,"[3] takes issue with the Freud-Jones interpretation. He restudied the play in the light not of "patricidal" drive but of consuming hostility against the mother. The matricidal theme can be demonstrated from the text far more plausibly than the patricidal theory. Hamlet is a version rather of the Orestes Complex—much more closely parallel to Orestes' murder of his mother, Clytemnestra, than to Oedipus. An astonishing case that came under the observation of Dr. Wertham, the Italian boy, Gino, who viciously stabbed his mother to death, led Dr. Wertham to write an extended analysis in his *The Dark Legend, A Study in Murder,*[4] drawing graphic parallels from Hamlet and Orestes.

Against critics of the Historical School who inveigh against such "anachronism" and modern "psychologizing" and raise the objection that Hamlet is not and never was a living personality, Dr. Wertham answers: "Literature is not the opposite of human social life; it is an

important part of it. The story of Hamlet may be fictitious, but its content is true."

Lest we cast aside too readily at this point the psychoanalytic approach to literature, we may well read Lionel Trilling's critical estimate of its values and limitations in "Freud and Literature."[5] In reviewing the Freud-Jones interpretation of *Hamlet,* he contends against its disparagers that "it is the only systematic account of the human mind which in point of subtlety and complexity, of interest and tragic power, deserves to stand beside the chaotic mass of psychological insights which literature has accumulated through the centuries."

The difficulty, however, with the psychological approach is to find agreement amid the profusion of psychiatrists; for, as Dr. Wertham concedes, "practically every functional mental disorder has been adduced at one period or another by psychiatrists as the solution of *Hamlet.* He has been described as having a psychosis and recovering during the play; developing a psychosis during the play; as merely malingering; as malingering and insane as well; as malingering and becoming insane during the play; as suffering from: hysteria, neurasthenia, hystero-neurasthenia, compulsive neurosis, manic-depressive psychosis, mania feigned by a melancholic, melancholia, *melancholia attonita,* melancholic monomania, schizophrenia, schizophrenia feigned by an introvert, dementia praecox, schizoid personality, psychopathic personality, degeneracy; as a déséquilibré."

III

THE IMPRESSIONISTS AND SYMBOLISTS

Third are the Impressionists and Symbolists, who have recently become the most vocal of our Shakespeare critics. Deriving their inspiration principally from G. Wilson Knight's series of works, beginning with *The Wheel of Fire* (1930), they believe, without regard to tradition, text or Elizabethan source materials, that Shakespeare was not of an age but for all time; and that the real meaning of his plays can be divined by tracing out by "insight" the underlying

patterns and poetic symbols. These so-called "New" Critics: Eliot, who long ago pronounced *Hamlet* "an artistic failure," Ransom, Tate, Cleanth Brooks in America, and L. C. Knights, F. R. Leavis and D. A. Traversi in England, have already been trenchantly dealt with in Oscar James Campbell's "Shakespeare and the 'New' Critics."[6]

Professor Campbell demonstrates that Shakespeare's imagination found expression in a "medley of metaphors," each one relevant only to some specific emotional situation rather than in an "integrated structure" or pattern for a whole play. Without reference to historical setting criticism is left wide open to endless preposterous vagaries. The free-ranging intuitions of G. Wilson Knight, for example, reduce the lovable Hamlet to the principle of Evil. Hamlet is the negative spirit of the Devil, Claudius, the wholesome positive principle of Good. Further degradation of Hamlet into a sort of contemptible Spaniard may be found in de Madariaga's *On Hamlet* (1948), reviewed in this issue.

Finally, to confound these Symbolists among themselves, comes another, Roy Walker, who in his address to the Shakespeare Club of Stratford, discovers symbols the very reverse of Knight's. *Hamlet* is the exact reflection of our own troubled times: Hamlet is the moral ideal, Claudius, the atom bomb!

> "The only true 'Hamlet,' is one in which all the images are reconciled into significant harmony." To the philosophy of relative values the world seems tolerable enough: to the Prince inspired with more absolute criteria it is a prison.
>
> We all know that the time is out of joint. While we talk of art and life, some of our fellows are making the night joint-labourer with the day, fashioning the weapons of atomic and bacteriological warfare, and we begin to accept that as 'normal,' as 'commonsense,' as one of the necessary 'uses of this world.' Our Western civilisation is terribly like the Elsinore of Claudius, and a great writer who died a few years ago, Max Plowman, said:; "Hamlet is self-conscious man encompassed by a world of violence that demands of him the

traditional response of violence. The nations of Europe are now self-conscious entities surrounded by violence and individually incapable of imagination; our world, in fact, is the world of Hamlet; a world that has suffered injury and cries out for justice."

Into this world, comes Shakespeare's Hamlet, a spirit warning us that the threat is less from without than from within. We are summoned instead to the ordeal of imagination, promised that fidelity to what imagination perceives is redemption.

The world of Claudius is poisoned and doomed. Those who take their cue from the conscienceless rulers of this world are doomed also. Much youth and innocence will be destroyed by the poison and by the corruption of disciplines in themselves healthy and loyalties in themselves necessary. Over against this world is the vision 'in the mind's eye' of a glory that was and is not. This vision is derided, persecuted, attacked on all sides, and may be destroyed altogether. Unavoidably it becomes corrupted fighting back with the world's own weapons. Salvation lies in the effort to remain aware, to suffer the slings and arrows; out of such suffering nobly endured emerges a divine spontaneity: 'The readiness is all.'

The Ghost is a symbol of a power greater than the usurper Claudius. . . . The Ghost is transformed in the eyes of the suffering hero from an armed warrior demanding revenge to a kindly father whose look moves his son to shed tears instead of blood.

Apparently there are as many symbolists disagreeing about the symbolic meaning of *Hamlet* as psychoanalysts about Hamlet's complex. All readers continue to find themselves in Shakespeare's universal tragedy.

Lehigh University.

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[1]King's Crown Press, Columbia University, 1947.
[2]*PMLA,* LXI, 3, September, 1946, pp. 651 ff.
[3]*Journal of Criminal Psychopathology,* II, 4, April, 1941.
[4]Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1941.
[5]*The Kenyon Review,* Spring, 1941.
[6]*Adams Memorial Studies,* The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948.

Illustration by F. Roberts Johnson for the Vision Press, Ltd., Edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

HAMLET'S "ALL BUT BLUNTED PURPOSE"

By George Detmold

EVERY critic has his own *Hamlet.* A classic, presumably, appeals to all ages and interests of critics just as it does to other varieties of men. The following remarks on the play are offered in respectful awareness of many an older, contradictory, and valuable theory upon it—but if they are logical and if they provide any insight into it they should also be of some value. Rightly or wrongly, they are not concerned with the question of Shakespeare's sources. They attempt to explain the play from the spectator's point of view rather than from the scholar's—for the playwright cannot expect his audience to consult his sources in order to understand what he has written. It must make sense as it stands, it must be explicable in its own terms, if it is to succeed. And few will question the success of *Hamlet,* in spite of the considerable disagreement over the character of the protagonist.

Hamlet is surely the most perplexing character in English drama. Who has not sympathized with the Court of Denmark in their bewilderment at his mercurial conduct? Theatre-goers, to be sure, are seldom baffled by him; perhaps the spectacle and melodrama of his undoing are powerful enough to stifle any mere doubts about his motives. But the more dispassionate audience of scholars and critics —if one may judge from the quantity of their published remarks— are often baffled. Seeking an intellectual satisfaction which will correspond to the pleasant purging of pity and terror in the spectator, they are only perplexed by Hamlet's behavior. They fail to understand his motives. How can a man so dilatory, who misses every opportunity to achieve what apparently he desires, who requires nearly three months to accomplish a simple and well-justified killing —how can such a man be classed a tragic hero? Is he not merely

weak and contemptible? How can he be ranked with such forceful men as Lear, Macbeth, Othello, or even Romeo? And yet he is a great tragic hero, as the playgoers will testify. The spectacle of his doings and undoing is profoundly stirring; it rouses the most intense emotions of awe and admiration; it never moves us to scorn or contempt.

In order to understand Hamlet, we must be able to answer the old question about him: "Why does he delay?"[1] Granting—as he does—that he has sufficient "cause, and will, and strength, and means" to avenge his father, why should he require approximately three months to do so, and then succeed almost purely by accident or afterthought?[2] There is only one possible reason why a strong, vigorous, intelligent man does not kill another when he feels no revulsion against the deed, when his duty requires that he do it, when he is not afraid, when the man to be killed is not invulnerable, and when the consequences of the act are either inconsiderable or are not considered at all. Hamlet delays to kill his uncle only because he has little interest in doing so. His thoughts are elsewhere. Most of the time he forgets about it, as we forget about a letter that should be answered—and only occasionally does he remember it and ponder his reluctance to perform this simple duty. Rightly or wrongly, he is preoccupied with other things.

Yet revenge, especially when it entails murder, is a tremendously important affair; how can any man overlook it? What kind of man can consider what kind of thing more important? Is Hamlet in any way unique, beyond or above or apart from our experience of human nature? Let us examine him as a man and—more important—as a tragic hero.

We must realize that there is nothing curious or abnormal about him. He is recognizably human; he is not diseased or insane.[3] If this were not so he would rouse no admiration in an audience, for it will never accord to a sick or crazy man the allegiance it usually gives to the tragic hero. The normal attitude toward abnormality is one of aversion. We worship strength and health and power, and will identify ourselves with the hero who displays these qualities. We may even identify ourselves with a Lear during his temporary insanity, but only because we have known him sane and can appreciate the

magnitude of his disaster. For the Fool who is his companion we can feel only a detached and tender compassion. Hamlet rouses stronger emotions than these, and only because we can recognize ourselves in him, because he is in the finest sense a universal man: Homo sapiens, man thinking—and man feeling, man acting. The proper habitat of the freak is the side-show or museum, not the stage.

But within this humanity and universality we may distinguish three characteristics which are usually found in the tragic hero. The first of these is a will-power surpassing in its intensity anything displayed by average men; the hero admits of no obstacle and accepts no compromise; he drives forward with all his strength to his desired goal. The second is a power of feeling likewise more intense than that possessed by average men; he rises to heights of happiness forever unattainable to the majority of us, and correspondingly sinks to depths of misery. The third is an unusually high intelligence, displayed in his actions and in his power of language. Aristotle sums up these characteristics in the term *hamartia:* the tragic flaw, the failure of judgment, the refusal to compromise. Passionately pursuing the thing he desires, the hero is incapable of compromise, of the calm exercise of judgment.

It will be seen that Hamlet possesses these three characteristics. His power of feeling surpasses that of all other characters in the play, expresses itself in the impassioned poetic diction peculiar to great tragedy. His intelligence is subtle and all-embracing, displaying itself not only in his behavior but also in word-plays beyond the comprehension of the others in the drama, and in metaphors beyond their attainment. But what can be said of his will-power, the one pre-eminently heroic characteristic?[4] He is apparently a model of hesitation, indecision, procrastination; we seem to be witnessing an examination of the failure of his will. And yet demonstrably it has not failed, and does at odd moments stir itself violently. In no other way can we account for the timidity of his enemies, the respect of his friends, and his own frank acknowledgement that he has "cause, and will, and strength, and means" to avenge his father. And though he is a long time in killing Claudius, he does kill him at last, and he is capable of other actions which argue the rash and impulsive nature of a man with strong will. He will "make a ghost" of any man who tries to prevent him from following his father's spirit. He murders

Polonius. He engineers the murder of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. He boards the pirate ship single-handed. He takes so long to kill Claudius only because he has little interest in revenge—not because he lacks will, but because it is inactive. Will-power does not spread itself in a circle around the possessor, but lies in a straight line toward the thing he desires.

Hamlet, then, has the heroic traits of Lear, Othello, Tamburlaine, Macbeth, and Oedipus: high intelligence, deep sensitivity, and strong will. There is another characteristic of the tragic hero without which the former ones would never be perceived: his delusion that there is some one thing in the world supremely good or desirable, the possession of which will make him supremely happy. And to the acquisition of the thing he desires he devotes all his will, all his intelligence, all his power of feeling. Thus Romeo dedicates himself to the pursuit of love, Macbeth to power, Lear to filial gratitude—and Hamlet to moral beauty.[5]

Hamlet's dedication to moral beauty is not difficult to perceive; and once understood, it explains his every action in the play. It is probably an unusual subject for devotion: love, honor, power, wealth, intellectual supremacy are the more customary idols of the tragic hero. Yet Hamlet seems a more normal character than Coriolanus or Barabas, and a more sympathetic one than Macbeth or Othello. There should be nothing unusual in a preoccupation with morality, since man is a moral animal as well as a greedy, a passionate, or an intelligent one. And there is nothing harsh or unlovely in Hamlet's conception of the good. He is no Puritan. What he seeks among men is not mere compliance with religious and ethical standards, but a moral loveliness in their thoughts and actions. Men, in his conception, are godlike; they should not conduct themselves like beasts. "What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!"—whether the words are spoken in seriousness or in irony they argue a deep-seated idealism in their author.

It is clear that, at some point before the opening of the play, Hamlet has been completely disillusioned. He has failed to discover moral beauty in the world; indeed, by the intensity of his search he

has roused instead his supreme evil: moral ugliness. The majority of us, the non-heroes, might disapprove of the sudden remarriage of a mother after the death of her husband—but we would probably not be nauseated. Hamlet, supremely sensitive to the godliness and beastliness in men, was overwhelmed by what he could interpret as nothing but lust. To be sure, the marriage of his mother and uncle was technically incestuous. But his objection to it lies much deeper than surface technicalities. He has worshipped his father, adored his mother (his love for her is everywhere apparent beneath his bitterness). Gertrude has mourned at the funeral "like Niobe, all tears." And then within a month she has married his uncle—a vulgar, contemptible, scheming drunkard[6]—exposing without shame her essentially shallow, thoughtless, amoral, animal nature.

The blow has been too much for Hamlet, sensitive as he is to moral beauty.

> O, most wicked speed, to post
> With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
> It is not, nor it cannot come to good.

That is, it cannot come to his conception of the good, whatever may be said for Gertrude's. He is unable to offer her understanding or sympathy, since to do so would mean compromising with his ideal of her. He fails to realize that no amount of scolding will ever improve her. Instead of accepting her conduct as inevitable or even endurable, he fights it, exaggerates it into a disgusting and an intolerable sin against everything he holds dear.[7] And because the sin may not be undone, and since it has destroyed his pleasure and purpose in living, he wishes to die. The only thing that restrains him from suicide is the moral injunction against it:

> O that this too too sullied flesh would melt,
> Thaw and resolve itself into a dew,
> Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
> His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.

The longing for death, once the supreme good has been destroyed, is entirely normal and usual in the tragic hero. Romeo, hearing that

Juliet is dead, goes immediately to her tomb in order to kill himself:

> O, here
> Will I set up my everlasting rest
> And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
> From this world-wearied flesh. . . .
> Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
> The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark.

Othello, when he realizes that in seeking to preserve his honor he has ruined it, prepares to die in much the same state of mind:

> Here is my journey's end, here is my butt
> And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

Macbeth, discovering at last that his frantic efforts to maintain and increase his power have only destroyed it, finds life a tale told by an idiot—and he too longs for death:

> I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,
> And wish the estate of the world were now undone.
> Ring the alarum bell. Blow wind, come wrack,
> At least we'll die with harness on our back.

Lear, instead of dying, is driven mad.[8] His counterpart, Gloucester, who also has lived for the love of his children, tries to throw himself from the cliff at Dover. Oepidus, too, when he discovers that he has ruined the city he tried to save, finds life worthless—blinds himself, and begs to be cast out of Thebes. As a general rule, whenever the tragic hero discovers that in his efforts to attain his supreme good he has only aroused his supreme evil, he kills himself, or goes mad, or otherwise sinks into a state that is death compared to his former state. Once he has lost all hope of gaining what he desires, he quite naturally finds no reason for continuing to live. Life in itself is always meaningless to him; he lives only for the good that he can find in it.

The curious thing about *Hamlet* is that it begins at the point where most other tragedies end: with the discovery by the tragic hero that his supreme good is forever lost to him. The play is surely unique among great tragedies. Elizabethan drama usually presents a double reversal of fortune—the rise and fall in the hero's prosperity

and happiness—or sometimes, as in *King Lear*, the fall and rise. Greek tragedy, limited to a single curtainless stage and thus to a late point of attack in the plot, could show only a single reversal—usually the fall in fortune from prosperity to misery, as is observed by Aristotle. But certainly nowhere else is there a tragedy like *Hamlet,* with no reversal at all, which begins after the rise and fall of the hero have taken place, in which the action does not coincide with his pursuit of the good, and which presents him throughout in despair and in bad fortune. We never see Hamlet striving for or possessing his good. Rather, he knows only the evil which is its counterpart; and in this unhappy condition he finds nothing further desirable except death. The kingship does not interest him; love does not interest him; revenge never interests him for long. He can think only about the foulness of mankind, of the beastly conduct of those people from whom he has expected the most godly—and in his despair he is intensely unhappy. Death, he knows, will be his only release. We find him longing for death at the outset of the play, in his first speech to us. Death is continually on his mind until he finally attains it at the end, the only "felicity" of which life is capable.

We are now in a position to understand why Hamlet takes so long to effect his revenge. Everyone in the play, including himself, recognizes that he is potentially dangerous, that he has the necessary courage and will to accomplish anything he desires. But the demand upon these qualities has come at a time when he has forever lost interest in exercising them. Upholding the divinity of man, he is betrayed by the one he thought most divine, exposed to her rank shameless adultery, bitterly disillusioned in all mankind, and desperate of any further good in existence. The revelation by the Ghost that murder has cleared a way for the new husband shocks Hamlet to the base of his nature, but it gives him no new incentive for living; it merely adds to his misfortune and confirms him in his despair. The further information that his mother has committed adultery provides a final shock. All evidence establishes him immovably in his disillusion. The Ghost's appeal to him for revenge is, remotely, an appeal to his good: if he may not re-establish the moral beauty of the world he may at least punish those who have violated it. But it is a distant appeal. The damage already done is irreparable. After giving passionate promises to "remember" his father, he regrets them:

> The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right.

Within ten minutes after his first meeting with the Ghost he has succumbed again to his anguish, which is now so intense after the discovery of his mother's adultery and the murder of his father that his mind threatens to crack under the strain. His conversation with his friends is so strange that Horatio comments upon it:

> These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

A few minutes later Hamlet announces his intention to feign madness, to assume an "antic disposition"—presumably as a means of relieving his surcharged feelings and possibly forestalling true madness, but certainly not as a means of deceiving Claudius and thus accomplishing his revenge.[9] At the moment there is no point in deceiving Claudius, who knows of no witnesses to the murder and who is more vulnerable to attack now than he will be at any point later in the play.

Two months later the antic disposition has succeeded only in arousing the King's suspicions. Hamlet has not effected his revenge; there is no sign that he has even thought about it. All we know is that he is badly upset—as Ophelia reports to her father:

> My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
> Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
> No hat upon his head, his stockings foul'd,
> Ungartered and down-gyved to his ancle,
> Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
> And with a look so piteous in purport
> As if he had been loosed out of hell
> To speak of horrors, he comes before me,

It is doubtful that he wishes to deceive the court into thinking that he is mad with unrequited love—only the fool Polonius is so deceived. Most probably he goes to Ophelia because he loves her as he loves his mother, and fears to discover in her the same corruption that has poisoned his mind towards Gertrude. He suspects that her love for him is insincere; his suspicions are later reinforced when he

catches her acting as the decoy of Claudius and Polonius.[10] But the one significant thing here is that his mind is still upon his old sorrow and not upon his father.

He does not recall his father until the First Player, in reciting the woes of Troy, speaks of the "mobled queen" who

> saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
> In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs.

Shortly afterwards Hamlet asks him to "play the Murder of Gonzago" and to "study a speech of some dozen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't." This, as we learn in the following soliloquy, is to be a trap for the conscience of Claudius. And why is a trap necessary? Because perhaps the Ghost was not a true ghost, but a devil trying to lure him to damnation. Most likely Hamlet is here rationalizing, trying to find an excuse for his dilatoriness, for forgetting the injunction of his father[12]—yet the excuse is a poor one, for never before has he questioned the authenticity of the Ghost. Furthermore, he does not wait for the trap to be sprung; throughout the performance of "The Mousetrap" he seems convinced of the guilt of Claudius, he taunts him with it.[13] But for a while he has stilled his own conscience and found a refuge from the flood of self-incrimination.

Before "The Murder of Gonzago" is enacted we see Hamlet alone once more. What is on his mind? His uncle? His father? Revenge? Not at all. "To be, or not to be, that is the question." He is back where he started, and where he has been all along, with

> The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
> That flesh is heir to.

He is still preoccupied with death.

"The Mousetrap" convicts Claudius beyond any doubt; he bolts from the room, unable to endure for a second time the poisoning of a sleeping king. And yet Hamlet, fifteen minutes later, with an admirable opportunity to kill his uncle, fails to do so—for reasons that are evidently obscure even to himself.[14] He wishes, he says, not only to kill the man, but to damn his soul as well, and thus will wait to kill him unconfessed. At this, apparently, the Ghost itself loses

patience, for it returns once more to Hamlet in the next scene and exhorts him:

> Do not forget: this visitation
> Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

The exhortation is wasted. On the same night, Hamlet allows the King to send him to England. Possibly he has no recourse but obedience; probably he knows what is in store for him; quite likely he does not care, may even welcome a legitimate form of dying; certainly he cannot, in England, arrange to kill his uncle. The next day, on his way to exile and death, he meets the army of Fortinbras, whose courage and purposefulness stimulate him to reflect upon his own conduct:

> How all occasions do inform against me,
> And spur my dull revenge!

He considers how low he has sunk in his despair:

> What is a man,
> If his chief good and market of his time
> Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.

Lamenting nothing in men so much as their beastliness, he has become little better than a beast himself. Why has he not performed the simple act of vengeance required by his dead father? He does not know:

> Now, whether it be
> Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
> Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
> A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
> And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
> Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do,'
> Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
> To do 't.

He is ashamed to have forgotten his duty:

> How stand I then,
> That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
> Excitements of my reason and my blood,
> And let all sleep . . . ?

And with the resolve:

> O, from this time forth,
> My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

he is off for England, where even the bloodiest thoughts will be utterly of no avail.

When he returns he is unchanged, still preoccupied with death. He haunts the graveyard with Horatio, reflects upon the democratizing influence of corruption. Overcome with disgust at the "rant" at Ophelia's funeral (he has seen too much insincerity at funerals), he wrestles with Laertes. He acquaints Horatio with the crimes of Claudius and resolves to revenge himself—and then accepts the invitation to the fencing match, aware that it is probably a trap, but resigned to whatever fate is in store for him. And with the discovery of his uncle's final perfidy, he stabs him with the envenomed foil and forces the poisoned wine down his throat. But there is still no thought of his father or of the accomplishment of an old purpose. He is stirred to action principally by anger at his mother's death:

> Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
> Drink off this potion: is thy union here?
> Follow my mother.

The murder of Claudius is simply accomplished. We see how easily it could have been managed at any time in the past by a man like Hamlet, with whatever tools might have come to his hand.[15] Even though the King is fully awake to his peril he is powerless to avert it. The only thing necessary is that Hamlet should at some time choose to kill him.

That Hamlet finally does so choose is the result of accident and afterthought. The envenomed foil, the poisoned wine, Laertes and

Gertrude and himself betrayed to their deaths—these things finally arouse him and he strikes out at the King. But he has no sense of achievement at the end, no final triumph over unimaginable obstacles. His uncle, alive or dead, is a side-issue. His dying thoughts are of the blessedness of death and of the sanctity of his reputation—he would clear it of any suggestion of moral evil but realizes that he has no time left to do so himself. Accordingly he charges Horatio to stay alive a little while longer:

> Absent thee from felicity a while,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
> To tell my story.

Then, after willing the kingdom to Fortinbras, he sinks into the oblivion which he has courted so long, and which now comes to him honorably and gives him rest.

Wells College

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[1]Some critics believe that Hamlet does not delay at all. George Lyman Kittredge acquits him of procrastination, since immediately after his promise to the Ghost he adopts the device of madness as a "detective agency," under cover of which he stalks his uncle. When it fails to produce evidence of the Ghost's veracity, he seizes the next opportunity for testing the King: the play within the play. He cannot kill Claudius at prayers without appearing an assassin, and he has no other opportunity to do so until the end of the play. *Hamlet,* ed. Kittredge, Boston, 1939, pp. xiii-xiv.

John Erskine Hankins also finds Hamlet not guilty of delay, because the Ghost requires of him a two-fold action: revenge upon Claudius and reform of Gertrude. The revenge could be accomplished immediately, but not without endangering the project of reform, which takes much careful consideration and is not effected until III, iv. Thus Hamlet does not delay unduly; he merely takes a not-unreasonable amount of time to work out a difficult problem. *The Character of Hamlet,* University of North Carolina Press, 1941, pp. 18-28.

These two theories seem conjectural at best. Neither of them accounts for Hamlet's belief that he does delay.

[2]A. C. Bradley classifies and refutes a large number of answers to this problem. *Shakespearean Tragedy,* London, 1937, pp. 91-108.

[3]Bradley, pp. 120-123, maintains that Hamlet suffers from a pathological melancholia which no exertion of the will can dispel. In this condition he is incapable of anything except purely impulsive action.

J. Dover Wilson compromises with the issue, believing that Hamlet is both mad and sane at the same time, the victim of a mental disorder and yet morally responsible for his actions. If this sounds impossible to us, we are enjoined to remember that Hamlet is not a real man, but only a dramatic illusion. *What Happens in Hamlet,* Cambridge University Press, 1935, pp. 205-229.

[4]Wilson, p. 226, speaks of Hamlet's "inability to perform that on which his mind is set, that which he wills . . . ." as a consequence of his melancholy. But a man with so weak a will that he does not even struggle for what he desires is certainly no hero. It seems likely then, if Hamlet is really a tragic hero, that he simply does not wish to kill Claudius. His mind is on other things: his mother, and his disillusion in her and consequently in all men and in life itself.

[5]Cf. the commentary of Joseph Quincy Adams in his edition of *Hamlet,* Boston, 1929, pp. 193 ff. "The young Prince possesses to a fatal extent *idealism regarding human nature."*

[6]This is Claudius as he appears to his nephew. Kittredge, however, finds him a "superb figure," clear-sighted, eloquent, dignified, courageous, self-controlled, intellectually the equal of Hamlet, capable of a great crime of passion for the Queen he loves. sp. xviii ff.

The theory is attractive; it yields an exciting production like Margaret Webster's. But it does not account for the contempt in which Hamlet holds his uncle, nor for Horatio's tacit agreement in this contempt, nor for Gertrude's acquiescence in it, nor for the Ghost's judgment: "a wretch whose natural gifts were poor to those of mine!" If Claudius is truly a superb figure, then much of Hamlet's condemnation of Gertrude loses its point: her taste in adultery would not be entirely regrettable. Our confidence in Hamlet would suffer if we saw him make so conspicuously bad a judgment upon the King.

[7]Caroline Spurgeon notes how Hamlet's disgust poisons his mind and colors his language. He sees the whole world stricken with a foul disease. There are in *Hamlet* more images of sickness, disease, and medicine than in any other of Shakespeare's plays. "We are almost startled at the constant conception of a corrupt and hidden tumour or cancer which is the central imaginative symbol of the tragedy." *Shakespeare's Imagery,* Cambridge University Press, 1939, Chart VII.

[8]Note the parallel between his condition and Hamlet's. Each of them, driven to despair, finds in madness—or in simulated madness—an outlet for a surge of feeling that is too powerful for normal modes of expression.

[9]Hankins, pp. 38-44, interprets the antic disposition as a planned effort, like "The Mousetrap," to force Claudius into revealing his guilt. The seemingly mad utterances will have relevance only to the King, who will eventually betray himself as he does in the play-scene. But there is no evidence that Hamlet so planned his madness; it seems rather to have been forced upon him by the urgency with which his passion demands an outlet—emotional rather than rational in origin.

Kittredge, p. xiii, likewise maintains that the feigned madness is an effort to trap the King. "We speak unguardedly in the presence of children and madmen, for we take it for granted that they will not listen or will not understand; and so the King and Queen (for Hamlet does not know that his mother is ignorant of her husband's crime) may say something that will afford the evidence needed to confirm the testimony of the Ghost." This theory is also untenable: Hamlet never gives it as his object in pretending madness; he never eavesdrops; he never tries to trap Claudius in a confession of guilt until III. ii. If it is his object, it is certainly a foolish one, since he pursues it for two months with a constantly diminishing prospect of success.

The comments of J. Q. Adams, p. 229, are much to the point: "[Hamlet] made no serious attempt to convince others that he was mad; indeed, he seems hardly to have cared whether they thought him mad or not."

[10]Harley Granville-Barker demonstrates convincingly that Hamlet is aware of Claudius and Polonius behind the arras, and that he is thereby made certain that Ophelia is in league with them. *Prefaces to Shakespeare,* Princeton University Press, 1946, I. 77-79.

[12]The point is crucial in most interpretations of the play. Kittredge, among many others, disagrees with this explanation, maintaining that Hamlet has sincerely doubted the identity of the Ghost from the beginning, and may not proceed with his revenge until he has certain proof of his uncle's guilt. Pp. xi-xiv. If this is true, however, one

would like to know at what point Hamlet changed his first opinion of the Ghost: "It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you." Furthermore, there is no valid reason why—if he doubts the Ghost—he should wait two months before testing Claudius, and no good explanation of his failure to kill him once guilt is established. One would think that after the play-scene, and after two months of watchful waiting, Hamlet would draw his sword and rush upon the King. But what occurs instead?—more temporizing, another excuse.

[13]Cf. Granville-Barker, pp. 90-91. This is further evidence that he does not truly doubt the identity of the Ghost, for otherwise he could not prejudge Claudius.

[14]This scene (III. iii), generally recognized as the turning point in the action and one of the most critical scenes in the play, is variously interpreted. Very few critics agree about what it means; it can be made to support any interpretation of the play. What happens here is that Hamlet, presented with an admirable opportunity for killing his uncle, fails to take advantage of it. His explicit reason is that Claudius, killed at prayer, will go to heaven—and heaven is too good for him; he should be killed unconfessed and sent to hell.

If Hamlet's words can be taken at their face value, he wants not only revenge but perfect revenge: Claudius must die and burn as the elder Hamlet has died and burned. But it is difficult to construe this desire as an excuse for his delay—because the Ghost never asks for perfect revenge and Hamlet never mentions it before or after this scene. The Ghost, indeed, returns a hundred lines later to rebuke Hamlet for procrastination. Claudius actually is killed unconfessed at the end of the play, but the manner of his death produces no perceptible satisfaction in his murderer. Consequently one cannot accept Hamlet's words at their face value, though what may be his precise motive for speaking them is difficult to determine. He seems to be rationalizing, finding another excuse for delay. He assumes that he can dispatch his uncle at any time he chooses—but just now he does not choose to do so. And his action here—or his inaction—is surely just as significant as his words are: *he does not kill Claudius.* The opportunity is faultless (or so we would think on the basis of all evidence so far): but he finds fault.

[15]Kittredge, p. xvi, finds this the first moment in the play (after III. iii) when Hamlet has Claudius at his mercy: the King is "well guarded and Hamlet is under surveillance"—although "the guards do not always appear on the stage." But surely Claudius is at Hamlet's mercy throughout the play. This is what makes the King so exquisitely anxious. It is the work of two seconds to draw one's sword and kill a man; Hamlet is armed and boasts of the ease with which he could kill Claudius: "And a man's life no more than to say 'One'."

If bodyguards will not save Claudius at the end they will not save him anywhere. Laertes broke through them and could have dispatched him easily in IV. v. Hamlet nowhere complains that he can't get at his uncle; his only lament is that he neglects to do so.

HORATIO'S HAMLET

By J. Duncan Spaeth

> Thou liv'st. Report me and my cause aright
> To the unsatisfied.

THESE words of dying Hamlet suggest that he, or better his creator, foresaw the varying judgments that posterity would pass upon his character and his cause. These conflicting judgments, stained with the variation of each soil through which the mind of literary or theatrical interpreter has passed, have left and still leave dissenters vexed and unsatisfied. The truth is, there are varying judgments because the play itself portrays various, variable, and sometimes seemingly inconsistent Hamlets, presenting the facets of his complex personality as reflected in the mirror which the other characters of the play hold up to his nature. The enigma of his behavior, the puzzle of his "meaning" is complicated by the change,—"transformation" Claudius calls it—resulting from the revelation made by the ghost. Not only is he a different Hamlet in different situations, and in the presence of such different characters as Ophelia, his mother, Polonius, Claudius, but for a large part of his time his words and acts are calculated mystifications, intended not to reveal but to conceal his true self. We must accordingly distinguish between Hamlet masked, and Hamlet unmasked: between Polonius's Hamlet, Ophelia's Hamlet, Gertrude's Hamlet, the Players' Hamlet, Osric's Hamlet, Hamlet's Hamlet of the soliloquies, and Horatio's Hamlet.

Though there were depths and doubts, dark and devious passages in Hamlet's nature that plain straight-forward Horatio could never trace or fathom, the dying words of Hamlet indicate that Shakespeare intends us, if not to understand Hamlet as mirrored by Horatio, (Horatio is no psycho-analyst) at least to judge him and his cause aright in the defense delivered by his friend. In Horatio's Hamlet

there are none of the inconsistencies of conduct, the perplexing contradictions that result from his antic disposition that have left vestigial traces elsewhere in the play. Moreover Horatio's Hamlet is the Hamlet that wins our sympathy at the close, and Hamlet's last words to Horatio atone for his precedent cynicisms, his fits of irresolution, his paroxysms of futile frenzy, and prevent them from doing our ear that violence to make it truster of his own report against himself. In the old tale there is an unnamed foster-brother, who warns Hamlet of the plot of the King to entrap him by the seductions of a fair lady in love with him. Saxo calls him "collacteus," (fellow-nursling), "a cujus animo nondum sociae educationis respectus exciderat." Elton's translation "a foster-brother—who had not ceased to have regard for their common nurture," blurs the "recollection of a common education," emphasized by Shakespeare in developing this slight hint into a dramatic and perennially moving portrayal of a friendship begun in college days and outlasting the whips and scorns of time.

Shakespeare's Horatio does not seem to have known Ophelia, although in Saxo the "fair lady," like Horatio himself, was no stranger to Hamlet, and he was conciliated (sic) by the "vetus educationis societas," the old comradeship of schooldays. The "concubitus," in a remote fen, that Saxo reports is in itself no proof of previous coeducational cohabitations, or of the intimate relations between Ophelia and Hamlet that Señor Madariaga assumes as necessary to his interpretation of Hamlet. Horatio mentions Ophelia only once, and we are left in doubt whether he knew her. When a gentleman informs the Queen that Ophelia is distract, Horatio says: IV, v, 14.

> 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
> Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

In the grave-yard scene when Hamlet leaps into Ophelia's grave, Horatio restrains him, V, i, 259, "Good my Lord, be quiet," perhaps a reminiscence of his office as Hamlet's monitor, "officium monitoris" in Saxo. Hamlet who reveals his most intimate thoughts to Horatio, discusses with him all his secret plans, and begs Horatio to report him and his cause aright after he is gone, never once mentions Ophelia to his friend. It has often been remarked that Ophelia does not occupy Hamlet's thoughts in his soliloquies. The absence of any

mention of her in his intimate confidences to Horatio is equally remarkable. In their conversations there is no evidence of Hamlet's disillusionment in love, or his violent revulsion against sex, which appear in his soliloquies and in his conduct and remarks to Ophelia, to Polonius, and to his mother.

In our attempt to realize Shakespeare's intention, his "meaning" in the Hamlet-Horatio relationship, let us briefly review the scenes that throw light upon it.

1) Horatio accosts the Ghost (I, i, 40-175).

Horatio, a university student, above the superstitions of the vulgar, at first scoffs at Bernardo's story of the ghost that he and his fellow soldier claim to have seen: "Tush, tush, 'twill not appear." When it does, they say:

> Thou art a *scholar;* speak to it.

But even Horatio trembles and looks pale when he *sees* the apparition:

> I might not this believe
> Without the sensible and true avouch
> Of mine own eyes.

Straightway he decides to acquaint Hamlet with what they have seen:

> As needful in our *loves,* fitting our *duty.*

Though above the soldiers in education, Horatio shows no sense of superiority but is at one with them in the equality of their common devotion and loyalty to Hamlet.

2) Horatio meets Hamlet and reports what he has seen (I, ii, 160-258).

> Enter Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.
>
> Horatio: Hail to your lordship!
> Hamlet: I am glad to see you well, Horatio!—or I do forget myself.
> Horatio: The same, my lord, and your poor *servant* ever.
> Hamlet: Sir, my good *friend;* I'll change *that* name with you.
> And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

Horatio: A truant disposition, good my lord.
Hamlet: I would not hear your enemy say so,
Nor shall you do my ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?

Note that this conversation occurs immediately after Hamlet's soliloquy, "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt" with its physical revulsion against the "carnal" infection of the world.

Fie on't! Oh fie, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.

Horatio's presence momentarily dispels Hamlet's morbid mood. Evidently Hamlet has not seen Horatio for sometime but he quickly recognizes him. "Horatio, or do I forget myself." They have been fellow-students at Wittenberg. Claudius has refused Hamlet permission to return.

For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg.
It is most retrograde to our desire.

Laertes, the man of the world, the gay courtier, goes to France. Hamlet, the student, goes to Germany to study at the University made famous by Martin Luther. No wonder the Germans have shown a special interest in explaining Hamlet's "Weltanschauung"! Did they not consider themselves responsible for his education?

Note also the emphasis on the "democracy" of a college friendship in this meeting between Hamlet and Horatio. Hamlet, a prince of the blood, rich and distinguished, (Ophelia's Renaissance prince); Horatio poor, with no revenue but his good spirits, a commoner with no influential connections, but both *gentlemen* and *scholars!* Horatio greets Hamlet by his title; "Hail to your lordship"; when he adds "My lord, and your poor *servant* ever," Hamlet replies "*Sir,* my good *friend,* I'll change *that* name with you." When Horatio, answering Hamlet's query: "what are you doing away from College," says "Taking cuts," Hamlet retorts: "I know you better, you are no truant," and this leads to the ensuing longer conversation about the

ghost, which is as important for the plot of the play, as the brief introductory interchange is for the characterization of Hamlet.

(Cf. Wordsworth Prelude IX, 225, when he praises "academic institutes."

> And rules, that they held something up to view
> Of a Republic, where all stood thus far
> Upon equal ground, that we were *brothers all*
> *In honour, as in one community*
> *Scholars and gentlemen.*)

3) Hamlet, Horatio, and the Ghost Scenes (I, iv, and v).

Horatio, carrying out his promise, watches with Hamlet and Marcellus at midnight on the platform, (I, iv, 1-38). Note that Horatio's first concern is for Hamlet's safety when the ghost beckons him to go away with it. "You shall not go, my lord; be ruled you shall not go." And when Hamlet breaks away Horatio says: "He waxes desperate with imagination," (I, iv, 87).

4) Hamlet's meeting with Horatio after the Ghost's disclosure (I, v, 112-191).

Hamlet's first impulse is to keep the ghost's revelation to himself; he repels with ironic riddling words Horatio's "What news, my lord?" But Horatio's evident hurt at his wild and whirling words, causes him to relent: "I'm sorry they offend you, heartily; Yes, faith, heartily." He takes both Horatio and Marcellus into his confidence as "friends, scholars, soldiers" and though he does not reveal until later and to Horatio alone, what the ghost has told him,

> For your desire to know what is between us,
> O'er master it as you may. . . .

he does confide to them his intention to put an antic disposition on and swears them never to betray that they are privy to his ruse.

> . . . Let us go in together;
> And still your finger on your lips, I pray.

As they stand back to give him precedence in leaving he says: "Nay, come, let's go *together.*"

(These comments focus only the light thrown on Hamlet's relation to Horatio. There is, of course, much else, that Horatio never dreamed of in his philosophy.)

5) Hamlet's relation to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (II, ii, 1-38; 226-320. III, ii, 307-390).

Shakespeare as is his manner emphasizes Horatio's Hamlet by way of dramatic contrast, with the Hamlet of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Like Horatio, they are boyhood friends and fellow-students of Hamlet, but while Horatio puts friendship above self-interest, they put self-interest and advancement at court, above friendship, crooking the pregnant hinges of the knee where thrift may follow fawning. Whereas Hamlet's conduct and conversation is like a suit whose wrinkles betray his own peculiar and personal form and habit, theirs is creased into conformity with convention. Hamlet is unpredictable. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are a perfectly predictable pair, unoriginal and uniform, true to type, and nothing else. They react alike and the same epithets apply equally to either.

> King: Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.
> Queen: Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.

(It wouldn't make any difference if you called them Rosenstern and Guildencrantz.)

We learn (II, ii, 1-40) that the King has sent for them to *use them* in discovering the reasons for Hamlet's strange behavior,—"transformation; so I call it," and "being of so young days brought up with [Hamlet]," thinks they may succeed where he has failed. The Queen testifies to Hamlet's friendly feelings toward them:

> Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
> And sure I am two men there are not living
> To whom he more adheres. (II, ii, 19-21)

This is the background Shakespeare provides for their first meeting with Hamlet (II, ii, 226.) immediately after his interview with Polonius whom he has dismissed as a tedious old fool. As in his meeting with Horatio, he counters their formal bows and salute,—"my honor'd lord!" "My most dear lord"—with a hearty handshake

of friendship, "My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both." After some playful banter and bawdy repartee such as he never indulges in with Horatio, they offer to wait on him, and Hamlet replies: "No such matter. I will not sort *you* with the rest of my servants," and with a change of voice from jest to seriousness: "But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?" When Rosencrantz replies: "To visit you, my lord; no other occasion," Hamlet retorts: "Come, deal justly with me . . . the good King and Queen have sent for you." —And he makes a last appeal to them to side with ingenuous youth against scheming age, to put honesty above policy, and friendship above feigning.

> Hamlet: Let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no!
>
> Rosencrantz (Aside to Guildenstern): What say you?
>
> Hamlet (Aside): Nay, then, I have an eye of you.
> If you love me, hold not off.
>
> Guildenstern: My lord, we *were* sent for.

When they confess they were sent for to spy on him, he anticipates their attempt to pluck out the heart of his mystery by his famous speech: "I have of late—but wherefore I know not—[he knows very well] lost all my mirth" (II, ii, 297-324). The subject is suddenly changed by their announcement of the arrival of the players, a palpable piece of stitch work in the plot, for the purpose of preparing for a necessary question of the play to be later considered. When they report to the King their interview with Hamlet, (III, i, 1-15) the Queen asks "Did he receive you well?" and Rosencrantz replies: "Most like a gentleman." In his speech to Horatio (III, ii, 75) Hamlet praises friends who "are not a pipe for Fortune's finger to sound what stop she please." Shakespeare remembered the figure and dramatized it in the brief but thrilling scene (III, ii, 360-390) in which Hamlet finishes with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

6) Hamlet's Horatio. After Hamlet conceives the plan to catch the conscience of the King by the play (II, ii, 633), he confides it to Horatio, (III, ii, 50-92).

When half-friends go, the friend arrives:

Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
Hamlet: What ho! Horatio!
Enter Horatio.
Horatio: Here, sweet lord, at your service.
Hamlet: Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man as e'er my conversation cop'd withal!
Horatio: O, my dear lord,—
Hamlet: Nay, do not think I flatter,
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the King:

This is Hamlet's most significant speech to Horatio, and reveals Hamlet's real self, the sound core of his inmost being that he lets only Horatio see. The cutting of this passage, as is frequently done in the

theatre, destroys one of Shakespeare's main guides to the understanding of Hamlet. Horatio's Hamlet not only corrects Hamlet's Hamlet of the soliloquies, but Ophelia's Hamlet, as he was mirrored in her mind before and after the shock that cracked her mirror.

7) Hamlet's Return to Denmark. Hamlet's letter to Horatio from the ship, announcing his return to Denmark (IV, vi, 12-33) and his account of his adventure with the pirates, and his alteration of the letter of Claudius, are essential to the plot, but add little to the characterization except as they confirm our estimate of Horatio as Hamlet's only trusted friend. Though Horatio heard Hamlet tell (V, ii, 46) how he had conjured the King of England to the bearers of the letters, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, "to sudden death, not shriving time allow'd," he tells the ambassador from England, after it is all over, (V, ii, 385), "He never gave commandment for their death." Was this an inadvertence on Shakespeare's part, or did he intend to represent Horatio as protecting Hamlet against dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds, ignorant of the truth and the real reasons responsible for an apparently wanton act of cruelty, as though Shakespeare were saying: "The old play made him do it, but I don't want you to believe it." Hamlet's last words to Horatio:

> Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, Death,
> Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—
> But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;
> Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
> To the unsatisfied.
> Horatio: Never believe it:
> I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
> Here's yet some liquor left.
> Hamlet: As thou'rt a man,
> Give me the cup. Let go! By heaven, I'll have't!
> O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
> Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
> Absent thee from felicity a while
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
> To tell my story.

[*March afar off, and shot within.*]

What warlike noise is this?
Osric: Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.
Hamlet: O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.
I cannot live to hear the news from England
But I do prophesy th' election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice.
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence.

[*Dies.*]

Horatio: Now cracks a noble heart. Goodnight, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

At the close Hamlet speaks his last words to Horatio. It is as though Shakespeare said: "Remember Hamlet, as Horatio knew him." Horatio's Hamlet is Shakespeare's final bequest to the unsatisfied. His own most original contribution to the character of Hamlet which he inherited, is in the soliloquies that give us insights into fathomless deeps of human nature. The Hamlet of the soliloquies is the passionate thinker who fain would pierce the veil of seeming. The irony of fate makes him who knows not seeming put on the mask of seeming to penetrate the seeming of others. Shakespeare, master of characterization by contrast, sets the skepticism of Hamlet beside the dogmatism of Polonius, Hamlet's despair of attaining the Truth with Polonius' cocksureness that he can find it, though it were hid in the centre, as he contrasts the hesitation and vacillation of Hamlet with the impulsive forthrightness and haste of Laertes in avenging *his* father's death. Hamlet's problem is peculiarly the problem of the scholar, the thinker, the intellectual, the man of questioning analytic mind who looks before he leaps, who weighs before he concludes, who is conscious of the risk involved in all action, who knows he can change his mind but never his deed, whose self-scrutiny corrodes his self-confidence. It is interesting that the most brilliant modern exposition of Hamlet as the type of the skeptic paralyzed by doubt has been that of Ivan Turgenief (too little known) in which he contrasts Hamlet and Don Quixote as the eternal Human Types. And it is ironic that this indictment of Hamlet, a Scandinavian Nor-

dic, as an impotent dreamer, should come from a Slavic genius. The doubter of the Hamlet type risks nothing and loses all. Faith is willingness to risk. Love is willingness to risk. Courage is willingness to risk. Hamlet's love is blighted, his faith in friends undermined, his courage not quenched but made to seem irrelevant. But from the last stage of utter spiritual desolation, reached by Macbeth when learning that Lady Macbeth was dead he cried: "She should have died hereafter,—Life's a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing," Hamlet is saved by his love for Horatio. A retainer says to Lear: "Thou hast one daughter who *redeems* nature from the general curse that twain have brought her to." So Shakespeare says to Hamlet at the close: Thou hast one friend who redeems nature from the general curse that twain, the King and Gertrude, have brought her to.

To the very end this love and trust and faith refreshed his spirit, like a fountain in a dry land, and it is through this love at the close that Shakespeare touches in our hearts the springs of human affection, pity and awe, so that we say with Horatio as Hamlet's voice is hushed in death,

> Now cracks a noble heart
> Good night, Sweet Prince!

Princeton University. (Emeritus)

The F. Roberts Johnson Hamlet Illustrations

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THERE'S NOTHING EITHER GOOD OR BAD BUT THINKING MAKES IT SO

By Percy H. Houston

THE perennial problem of Hamlet, which has agitated scholars and not-so-good scholars since the rise of the Romantic Movement, in England and especially in Germany, seems to be like life itself or the everlasting argument over the human will and Divine Grace, a perpetual matter of subjective response. From romantic dreaming and Victorian sentimentality the pendulum has swung to the hard-boiled realism of modern textual critics and students of the stage who permit a playwright to mean only what the action in a first-class Elizabethan melodrama reveals.

When I undertook to choose a text for my class in Shakespeare for the fall semester, I had before me Kittredge's *Sixteen Plays,* Hardin Craig's *Shakespeare,* the Brooke, Cunliffe and MacCracken and the G. B. Harrison selected plays. Out of curiosity I turned to what these eminent editors had to say on this controversial subject in the hope of finding some unanimity of opinion or some confirmation of my own theories formed from some years of discussion in the classroom. I found no agreement among these scholars, and no more than a suspicion of my own position on the subject.

Professor Kittredge, whose authority has always weighed heavily with me, almost persuaded me of the rightness of his position: that Hamlet's was a necessarily deferred revenge, that after he became fully aware of the situation in which he found himself he acted with decision but was frustrated in his design by an opponent of no mean ability, that his failure to kill the King at prayer was wholly in accordance with an old-established custom of adequate revenge, and that he justifiably ran his sword through the body of Polonius while

mistaking him for the King. Harding Craig admits the plausibility of a subjective interpretation, citing both Coleridge and Goethe, but declares that the reader must not ascribe such interpretation to the mind of Shakespeare when he wrote the play. Harrison, ranging himself beside Kittredge in what we may call the common-sense school of interpretation, sticks closely to the stage conventions' argument. A slight break in interpretation comes with Brooke, Cunliffe and MacCracken, who declare for a double interpretation of Hamlet's conduct, in that Kyd, at least his influence, is responsible for the action of the play and Shakespeare for the characterization.

On the other side, in favor of what modern scholarship now deprecates as the romantic interpretation of Hamlet's character, we may place A. C. Bradley's famous account in his *Shakespearean Tragedy* and Joseph Quincy Adams's detailed study of the play. Bradley would regard our hero not as a mere thinker, incapable of practical activity, but rather as a young man possessed of noble gifts which at the crisis of his life conspired to paralyze his impulse to action. Thence a melancholy due to the shock of his father's death and his mother's scandalous marriage destroyed his will, just as his active imagination and his generalizing habit of mind offered him a kind of psychological compensation for his failure to accomplish what he knew to be his sacred duty. Hence his entire moral world collapsed about him, and he could do little else than indulge in endless and futile mental dissection. He was not a mere dreamer and poet but a noble and charming youth (witness Ophelia's comments upon him) who found the very springs to action vitiated by a corrupt world to which he did belong but which he could not manage.

Professor Adams merely accepts this theme of the debilitating effects of melancholy to prove that Shakespeare has made a detailed study of a peculiar temperament which, becuse it was forced to act contrary to its high ideals, failed in the process — the constant theme, it seems to me, of all Shakespearean tragedy.

And this is the point I wish to make in this paper. I am convinced that the strict constructionists are in the right in insisting that Shakespeare wrote directly for the contemporary stage under conditions inherited from the long and the immediate past, and that

we have no right to impute ulterior motives to him that neither he nor his audiences could have comprehended. E. E. Stoll and Kittredge and Harrison are wholly right within the limits of their position. And yet these highly trained Elizabethan scholars have, in their positive assertion of knowledge of a great poet's mind, failed to comprehend how such a mind inevitably gives more to the world than a mere conscious effort to provide some excellent melodrama for a more or less unlettered audience. Moreover, these learned scholars, perhaps because of a certain fear of assuming anything not warranted by the text, seem to have missed the double note to be found in all great tragedy.

Let us see how the matter works out. Let us also begin with the Renaissance, that extraordinary period not merely of extreme artistic creation but of voyages and discoveries, of the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth, of the displacement of man as the center of his universe and his consequent decline from his exalted position as the favored creation of an omnipotent God, of incessant and restless activity in every direction, of growing skepticism and concerted attack upon medieval ways of conceiving the life of man and his relationship to a higher power. Not only was the medieval synthesis broken by the triumph of Nominalism and the breakdown of Aristotelian disputation but the spiritual unity of Europe was shattered by the revolt of Luther and his successors from the authority of Rome. The Renaissance Humanist was a many-sided phenomenon, but in every case he represents a revolt from authority and an assertion of self-will as he turned to an appreciation of the life of the senses or absorbed himself in the revival of classical literature and philosophy or followed his impulse towards discovering and colonizing the New World. He was philosopher, statesman, theologian, classical scholar, sometimes all of these at one and the same time.

Now these Humanists flourished during a period which we now know to have been a turning-point in history, the transition from a theological and authoritarian view of man and his universe to the modern secularization of knowledge and the growing insistence by the individual on his right to work out his salvation, in this world and the next, as best he can. We know, as Professor Spencer has told us, that Copernicus, Machiavelli and Montaigne effected a revolution

in thought comparable only to those of Darwin and Einstein not too remote from our own distracted times. And we know that Shakespeare, while never a systematic philosopher of any sort, did as a supremely great poet receive the full impact of such a period. We know that he inherited his dramatic technique and much of his moral outlook from the medieval past but that he was sensitively alive to nearly all the currents of thought that swept across the creative minds of the time. Thoroughly steeped in the Gothic past, he nevertheless was able to create characters who embodied in themselves many of the qualities of this Humanistic revival. The Renaissance soldier and courtier and statesman fill the pages of his histories and his tragedies while his delightful romantic heroines call upon us to dally with them in the Forest of Arden or on the coast of Illyria or in a Venetian hall of justice. Not a learned scholar, he yet drew into himself with every breath the fragrance of the New Learning that permeated the air wherever he went. And he undertook to portray some of the fashionable humours which it was the custom of his fellow playwrights to illustrate upon the stage. The humour of melancholy was not the least of these.

Now I think we are ready for Hamlet the character and Hamlet the play. Though in substance the play is a typical revenge play of the vintage of Kyd, it is also, unless I misread what I believe to be signposts all along the way, a full-length study of a temperament, or humour, one clearly generated by psychological influences produced by those unquiet times.

Hamlet, that is to say, was a young man, trained at court to be a "governour"; he was the glass of fashion and the mould of form with most of the accomplishments of the Renaissance Humanist. At the opening of the play we find him a student at the University of Wittenberg, where he doubtless pursued studies in theology and the humanities. It will be noted that in his first great soliloquy he makes two references to classical mythology, and again in the closet scene with his mother he seems to turn inevitably to what was uppermost in his mind when his mind grew excited. Again, in this most instructive first soliloquy he proceeds, first, to express his doubts concerning the Christian prohibition against self-slaughter, revealing thereby his awe of orthodox teaching, and, second, his speculative habit of gen-

eralizing from the specific instance—"Frailty, thy name is woman." And overall the young poet-philosopher speaks volubly, here and throughout the play, repeating a single idea in more than one way—"How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable"; "Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words, And fall a-cursing, like a very drab, A scullion!" It would seem that as his excitement grew his word-hoard was unlocked, and all the rich vein of poetry that was in his nature came to utterance.

So, when his self-confessed weakness and his melancholy take possession of him, he proceeds to brood upon his condition; "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all," this conscience, as I have heard Kittredge explain, meaning consciousness, the very necessity that we have to live and breathe and make moral decisions in the world of men.

> The time is out joint; O cursed spite
> That ever I was born to set it right.

From thinking too precisely on the event, he passes to his famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy, and there we have, I think, the case complete.

> Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all;
> And thus the native hue of resolution
> Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
> And enterprises of great pith and moment
> With this regard their currents turn awry,
> And lose the name of action.

Hamlet's mind has now turned to corruption from the split in his personality consequent upon a terrible shock to a sensitive nature. In no other way can we explain his harsh treatment of Ophelia, whose feminine understanding penetrates directly to the disturbance in the life of the man she loved. Thence onward he pursues his futile way, lashing himself into impotent fury and doing nothing except to indulge in hysterical excesses which never issue in any kind of deliberate action. In the last act he confronts the grave-diggers, having lost hope and the will to act, and seeing life in all its hideous corruption.

Hamlet, in effect, saw too deeply into the springs of human conduct ever to find rest. Abnormally sensitive to the disparity between

the world as it is and what man's God-given reason declares it should be, Hamlet is the Renaissance individualist who has lost faith in older forms of religious affirmation and now finds himself bereft of this reason as too frail a reed to lean upon. So is a great nature overthrown, and harshness and cruelty and festering corruption have destroyed as fine a nature as poet ever conceived.

It is then as poet that Shakespeare is greater than his conscious self. Once before in the tragic figure of Shylock he succeeded in breaking to pieces what would otherwise have been a somewhat silly romantic comedy. Again, I have heard Kittredge declare that Shylock was meant for a butt for the Jew-baiting audience's coarse jokes. But today we realize that Shakespeare was no Jew-baiter if Gratiano was, or he would never have put Shylock's piteous appeal as a human being in Shylock's: "Hath not a Jew eyes—" etc. So in the case of Hamlet, we have something greater and more enduring and profounder in its implications than the rattling good melodrama Kittredge would have us take it to be. The play, and the character, of Hamlet, because a supremely great poet and unsurpassed creator of poetically conceived characters had to do with their coming into the world, remain a picture of the depths in the soul of man for all succeeding generations.

Occidental College.

A NOTE ON MR. F. ROBERTS JOHNSON'S LINE DRAWINGS FOR *HAMLET*

By Cloyd M. Criswell

SINCE Mr. F. Roberts Johnson's illustrations for *Hamlet* are line drawings, it is as such a critic must judge them. Possibly years spent in a study of Shakespearean text may prevent one in reaching a detached appraisal of Mr. Johnson's work. He may have in mind as a standard for any pictorial rendering of Shakespeare's plays the ornate, tapestry-like oils of Edwin Abbey and the tight, photographic compositions of the Pre-Raphaelites, W. Holman Hunt and J. E. Millais; and he may dismiss Mr. Johnson's drawings as "modern," and therefore grotesque and distorted. Even so, such sketches as J. E. Millais' "Varnishing Morning" and W. Holman Hunt's "Claudio and Isabella"[1] are very close in spirit to Mr. Johnson's black and whites; and Mr. Johnson's drawing of Ophelia in the brook is reminiscent of J. E. Millais' painting of the same subject, as is the same scene in the Olivier film.

Exaggerating hands seems the one concession Mr. Johnson makes to present-day influences upon artists—in this case the unusual camera angle. In all other respects his *Hamlet* drawings bear relation to the line statements of Inigo Jones in his designs for *Coelum Britannicum* by Thomas Carew in 1634 and for *Luminalia* in 1638; to the graceful pencil notes of Daumier and Delacroix; and to the large body of Shakespearean drawings by Gordon Craig. To call the drawings "Modern" and distorted (El Greco, a contemporary of Shakespeare, won fame by his disconcerting emphasis upon elongated anatomy) would be to employ, as Hamlet has it, "words, words, words."

And it is difficult to see how an artist might avoid some suggestion of the grotesque element when illustrating a play in which one of the important characters is a ghost.

The partial nudity of the figures and the unidentifiable nature of their costume one might credit to Mr. Johnson's imagination; for the very reason that stage set designers and costume designers are applauded when their innovations in mounting a Shakespearean production increase the understanding of the audience. In Hamlet's first speech of any length he admits:

> But I have that within which passeth show,
> These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

It would appear that, by not calling attention to a particular costume for a particular character, Mr. Johnson lays more stress on internal torment, getting the state across to the observer by the use of sharp and tortured lines. His drawings, then, are functional, not decorative, an addition to the text, which is the chief value of illustration, no matter what medium the artist employs.

Lehigh University.

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[1] *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood,* The MacMillan Company, 1905.

Illustration by F. Roberts Johnson for the Vision Press, Ltd., Edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

SHAKESPEARE IN JAMES JOYCE

By Arthur Heine

THESE quotations, adaptations, and echoes from Shakespeare in *Ulysses* serve to show how saturated was the mind of James Joyce not merely with Irish pyschology and Dublin squalor, but with the poetry of Shakespeare. A similar, but probably not so thorough familiarity with the Classics, could also be demonstrated. The resort to Shakespeare phraseology, because the poet expressed thoughts better than anyone else, often in definitive form, may be found in similar fashion in the prose of De Quincey, Hazlitt, Stevenson and other English writers.

1 Pg. 8 The rage of Caliban at not seeing his face in a mirror, . . .
Allusion—*The Tempest*

2 Pg. 14 Printed by the weird sisters in the year of the big wind.
Allusion—*Macbeth* I. iii. 32
I. v. 9 (these weird sisters)

3 Pg. 17 Yet here's a spot.
Macbeth V. i. 34

4 Pg. 17 Wait till you hear him on Hamlet, Haines.
Allusion—*Hamlet*

5 Pg. 19 What is your idea of Hamlet?
Allusion—*Hamlet*

6 Pg. 19 He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father.
Allusion—*Hamlet*

7 Pg. 20 . . . this tower and these cliffs here remind me somehow of Elsinore *That beetles o'er his base into the sea,* isn't it?
Hamlet I. iv. 71

8 Pg. 26 Had Pyrrhus not fallen by a beldam's hand in Argos or Julius Caesar not been knifed to death.
Allusion—*Julius Caesar*

9 Pg. 29 He proves by algebra that Shakespeare's ghost is Hamlet's grandfather.
Allusion—*Hamlet*

10 Pg. 31 [But what does Shakespeare say?] *Put but money in thy purse.*
Othello I. iii. 352

11	Pg. 31	Iago, Stephen murmured.	Allusion—*Othello*
12	Pg. 38	Jesus! If I fell over a cliff that beetles o'er his base, . . .	. . . of the cliff (That beetles o'er his base into the sea.) *Hamlet* I. iv. 70-71
13	Pg. 40	In his broad bed nuncle Richie, . . .	Allusion—*King Lear*
14	Pg. 45	. . . in sable silvered, hearing Elsinore's tempting flood.	(A sable silver'd.) *Hamlet* I. ii. 241 and Allusion
15	Pg. 48	A side-eye at my Hamlet hat.	Allusion—*Hamlet*
16	Pg. 50	Full fathom five thy father lies.	*The Tempest* I. ii. 394
17	Pg. 51	A seachange this, . . .	(But doth suffer a sea-change . . .) *The Tempest* I. ii. 398
18	Pg. 72	. . . Brutus is an honourable man.	*Julius Caesar* III. ii. 88, 93, 100
19	Pg. 75	*Hamlet* she played last night. Male impersonator. Perhaps he was a woman. Why Ophelia committed suicide?	Allusion—*Hamlet*
20	Pg. 82	Glimpses of the moon.	*Hamlet* I. iv. 53
21	Pg. 87	. . . the wise child that knows her own father.	(. . . it is a wise father that knows his own child.) *The Merchant of Venice* II. ii. 83-84
22	Pg. 87	I'll tickle his catastrophe, . . .	*The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth* II. i. 68
23	Pg. 95	Like Shakespeare's face.	Allusion
24	Pg. 101	. . . heart of hearts.	(. . . in my heart of heart . . .) *Hamlet* III. ii. 78
25	Pg. 106	Love among the tombstones. Romeo	Allusion—*Romeo and Juliet*
26	Pg. 107	Gravediggers in *Hamlet.*	Allusion—*Hamlet*
27	Pg. 108	We come to bury Caesar. His ideas of March or June.	Parody—*Julius Caesar*
28	Pg. 125	He forgot Hamlet.	Allusion
29	Pg. 138	*And in the porches of mine ear did pour.*	[By the way did he find that out? He died in his sleep.] *Hamlet* I. v. 63 and Allusion
30	Pg. 138	[Or the other story] beast with two backs.	*Othello* I. i. 118
31	Pg. 142	Lay on, Macduff!	*Macbeth* V. vii. 62

32 Pg. 150 But then Shakespeare has no rhymes: blank verse.
Allusion

33 Pg. 150 *Hamlet, I am thy father's spirit*
Doomed for a certain time to walk the earth.
(I am thy father's spirit;
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night, . . .)
Hamlet I. v. 9-10

34 Pg. 175 Give the devil his due.
The Life of King Henry the Fifth III. vii. 132

35 Pg. 182 And we have, have we not, those priceless pages of *Wilhelm Meister?* A great poet on a great brother poet. A hesitating soul taking arms against a sea of troubles. . . .
Allusion to Goethe
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* III. i. 59

36 Pg. 182 I feel you would need me more for *Hamlet.*
Allusion

37 Pg. 183 . . . a figure which the world will set beside Saxon Shakespeare's Hamlet . . .
Allusion

38 Pg. 183 . . . though I admire him, as old Ben did, on this side idolatry.
Allusion—Ben Johnson in *Timber or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter.*

39 Pg. 183 I mean, whether Hamlet is Shakespeare or James I or Essex.
Allusion

40 Pg. 183 . . . the words of Hamlet bring our minds into contact with the eternal wisdom, . . .
Allusion

41 Pg. 183 . . . the noblest Roman of them all, . . .
Julius Caesar V. v. 68

42 Pg. 184 . . . Hamlet's musings about the afterlife of his princely soul,
Allusion—*Hamlet* III. i. 64-82

43 Pg. 184 *Unsheathe your dagger* definitions.
Paraphrase *The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth* II. ii. 59, 80, 123

44 Pg. 185 The one about *Hamlet.* He says: *il se proméne, lisant au livre de lui-même,* don't you know, *reading the book of himself.*
Allusion—Mallarmé

45 Pg. 185 He describes *Hamlet* given in a French town, . . .
Allusion

46 Pg. 185 HAMLET
ou
LE DISTRAIT
Pièce de Shakespeare
Allusion

47 Pg. 185 *Pièce de Shakespeare,* don't you know. It's so French, the French point of view. *Hamlet ou . . .*
The absentminded beggar, Stephen ended.
Allusion

48 Pg. 185 Sumptuous and stagnant exaggeration of murder. A deathsman of the soul Robert Greene called him, Stephen said. Not for nothing was he a butcher's son wielding the sledded poleaxe . . .
(He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice)
Allusion and Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. i. 63

49 Pg. 185 Nine lives are taken off for his father's one, . . . Khaki Hamlets don't hesitate to shoot. The bloodboltered shambles in act five is a forecast of the concentration camp sung by Mr. Swinburne.

Allusion—*Hamlet*

50 Pg. 185 He will have it that *Hamlet* is a ghost story, . . .

Allusion

51 Pg. 185-6 List! List! O list!
If thou didst ever . . .

Hamlet I. v. 22

52 Pg. 186 Elizabethan London lay as far from Stratford as corrupt Paris lies from virgin Dublin.

Allusion

53 Pg. 186 Who is the ghost from *limbo patrum,* returning to the world that has forgotten him? Who is king Hamlet?

Allusion

54 Pg. 186 . . . among the groundlings.

Paraphrase—*Hamlet* III. ii. 12

55 Pg. 186 Shakespeare has left the huguenot's house in Silver Street and walks by the swanmews along the river bank. . . . The swan of Avon has other thoughts.

Allusion—Ben Jonson's Eulogy *First Folio*

56 Pg. 186 It is the ghost, the king, a king, and no king, and the player is Shakespeare who has studied *Hamlet* all the years of his life . . .

Allusion

57 Pg. 186 *Hamlet I am thy father's spirit*
(I am thy father's spirit;)

Hamlet I. v. 9

58 Pg. 186 To a son he speaks, the son of his soul, the prince, young Hamlet and to the son of his body, Hamnet Shakespeare, who has died in Stratford that his namesake may live forever.

Allusion

59 Pg. 186 It is possible that that player Shakespeare, a ghost by absence, and in the vesture of buried Denmark, a ghost by death, speaking his own words to his own son's name that Hamnet Shakespeare lived he would have been prince Hamlet's twin . . .

Allusion

60 Pg. 187 Ann Shakespeare, born Hathaway?

Allusion

61 Pg. 187 Art thou there, truepenny?

Hamlet I. v. 150

62 Pg. 187 . . . when we read the poetry of *King Lear* . . .

Allusion—*King Lear*

63 Pg. 187 We have *King Lear:* and it is immortal.

Allusion—*King Lear*

64 Pg. 188 The world believes that Shakespeare made a mistake, he said, and got out of it as quickly and as best he could.

Allusion

65 Pg. 188 A shrew, . . .

Allusion

66 Pg. 188 But Ann Hathaway? . . . Yes, we seem to be forgetting her as Shakespeare himself forgot her.

Allusion

67 Pg. 188 He had a good groatsworth of wit, . . . (Robert Greene)
Allusion

68 Pg. 188 That memory, *Venus and Adonis,* lay in the bechamber, of every light-of-love in London.
Allusion—*Venus and Adonis*

69 Pg. 188 Is Katherine the shrew illfavoured? Hortensio calls her young and beautiful.
Paraphrase—*The Taming of the Shrew* I. ii. 87

70 Pg. 188-9 Do you think the writer of *Antony and Cleopatra,* a passionate pilgrim, had his eyes in the back of his head that he chose the ugliest doxy in Warwickshire to lie withal. Good: he left her and gained the world of men.
Allusion

71 Pg. 189 If others have their will Ann hath a way.
CXXXV and CXLIII
Paraphrase—Sonnets 135 and 143

72 Pg. 189 She put the comether on him, sweet and twenty-six. The greyeyed goddess who bends over the boy Adonis, stooping to conquer, as prologue to the swelling act, is a boldfaced Stratford wench who tumbles in a cornfield a lover younger than herself.
(As happy prologues to the swelling act)
Allusion to *Venus and Adonis* and *Macbeth* I. iii. 128

73 Pg. 189 *Between the acres of the rye*
These pretty countryfolk would lie.
(country folks)
As You Like It V. iii. 24, 26

74 Pg. 189 Paris: the well pleased pleaser.
Allusion—*Troilus and Cressida*

75 Pg. 190 Cordelia. *Cordoglio.* Lir's loneliest daughter.
Allusion—*King Lear*

76 Pg. 191 What Caesar would have lived to do had he believed the soothsayer:
Allusion—*Julius Caesar*

77 Pg. 191 Others abide our question.
Allusion—Matthew Arnold's Sonnet, *Shakespeare*

78 Pg. 191 But *Hamlet* is so personal, isn't it?
Allusion

79 Pg. 192 . . . if you want to shake my belief that Shakespeare is Hamlet you have a stern task before you.
Allusion

80 Pg. 192 . . . I feel Hamlet quite young. The bitterness might be from the father but the passages with Ophelia are surely from the son.
Allusion

81 Pg. 192 The plays of Shakespeare's later years which Renan admired so much breathe another spirit.
Allusion

82 Pg. 192 If you want to know what are the events which cast their shadow over the hell of time of *King Lear, Othello, Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida,* look to see when and how the shadow lifts.
Allusions

83 Pg. 192 What softens the heart of man, shipwrecked in storms dire, tried, like another Ulysses, Pericles, prince of Tyre.
Allusion

84 Pg. 193 A child, a girl placed in his arms, Marina.
Allusion—*Pericles*

85 Pg. 193 Good Bacon: gone musty. Shakespeare Bacon's wild oats. Cypher jugglers going the highroads.
Allusion

86 Pg. 193 Mr. Brandes accepts it, Stephen said, as the first play of the closing period.
Does he? What does Mr. Sidney Lee, or Mr. Simon Lazarus, as some aver his name is, say of it?
Allusion—*Pericles*

87 Pg. 193 Marina, Stephen said, a child of storm, Miranda, a wonder, Perdita, that which was lost. What was lost is given back to him: his daughter's child.
Allusions

88 Pg. 193 *My dearest wife,* [Pericles says,] *was like this maid.*
Pericles V. i. 108

89 Pg. 193 And we ought to mention another Irish commentator, Mr. George Bernard Shaw. Nor should we forget Mr. Frank Harris. His articles on Shakespeare in the *Saturday Review* were surely brilliant.
Allusions

90 Pg. 193 Oddly enough he too draws for us an unhappy relation with the dark lady of the sonnets. The favoured rival is William Herbert, earl of Pembroke.
Allusion

91 Pg. 194 He was himself a lord of language and had made himself a coistrel gentleman and had written *Romeo and Juliet.*
Allusion

92 Pg. 194 They list. And in the porches of their ears I pour.
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. v. 63

93 Pg. 194 . . . a poison poured in the porch of a sleeping ear.
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. v. 63

94 Pg. 194 . . . the beast with two backs . . .
Othello I. i. 118

95 Pg. 194 . . . king Hamlet's ghost could not know of were he not endowed with knowledge by his creator.
Allusion—*Hamlet*

96 Pg. 194 . . . from Lucrece's bluecircled ivory globes to Imogen's breast, bare, with its mole cinquespotted.
Allusion—*The Rape of Lucrece* and *Cymbeline* II. ii. 38

97 Pg. 194 His beaver is up.
Hamlet I. ii. 229

98 Pg. 194 He is a ghost, a shadow now, the wind by Elsinore's rocks . . .
Allusion—*Hamlet*

99 Pg. 195 Mr. Mulligan, I'll be bound, has his theory too of the play and of Shakespeare.
Allusion

100 Pg. 195 Shakespeare? he said. I seem to know the name.
Allusion

101 Pg. 196 The bard's fellowcountrymen, John Eglinton answered, are rather tired perhaps of our brilliancies of theorising.
Allusion

102 Pg. 196 I hear that an actress played Hamlet for the fourhundredandeighth time last night in Dublin.
Allusion

103 Pg. 196 The most brilliant of all is the story of Wilde's, Mr. Best said, lifting his brilliant notebook. That *Portrait of Mr. W. H.* where he proves that the sonnets were written by a Willie Hughes, a man of all hues.
Allusion

104 Pg. 196 Or Hughie Wills. Mr. William Himself. W.H.: who am I?
Allusion

105 Pg. 197-8 So Mr. Justice Madden in his *Diary of Master William Silence* has found the hunting terms.
Allusion

106 Pg. 199 You know Manningham's story of the burgher's wife who bade Dick Burbage to her bed after she had seen him in *Richard III* and how Shakespeare, overhearing, without more ado about nothing, took the cow by the horns and, when Burbage came knocking at the gate, answered from the capon's blankets: *William the conqueror came before Richard III*
Allusions

107 Pg. 199 And the gay lakin, mistress Fitton . . .
Allusion

108 Pg. 199 And sir William Davenant of Oxford's mother with her cup of canary . . .
Twelfth-Night I. iii. 87, 88

109 Pg. 199 But all those twenty years what do you suppose poor Penelope in Stratford was doing behind the diamond panes?
Allusion

110 Pg. 199 An azured harebell like her veins.
(The azur'd harebell, like thy veins)
Paraphrase—*Cymbeline* IV. ii. 222

111 Pg. 199 Lids of Juno's eyes, violets.
Paraphrase—*The Winter's Tale* IV. iii. 121

112 Pg. 199 Say that he is the spurned lover in the sonnets. Once spurned twice spurned. But the court wanton spurned him for a lord, his dearmy-love.
Allusion

113 Pg. 200 Two deeds are rank in that ghost's mind: a broken vow and the dull-brained yokel on whom her favour has declined, deceased husband's brother.
Allusion—*Hamlet*

114 Pg. 200 If you deny that in the fifth scene of *Hamlet* he has branded her with infamy tell me why there is no mention of her during the thirty-four years between the day she married him and the day she buried him.
Allusion

115 Pg. 200 All those women saw their men down and under: Mary, her goodman John, Ann, her poor dear Willun, when he went and died on her, raging that he was the first to go, Joan, her four brothers, Judith, her husband and all her sons, Susan, her husband too while Susan's daughter, Elizabeth, to use grandaddy's words, wed her second, having killed her first.
Allusion—*Shakespeare's Family*

116 Pg. 200 In the years when he was living richly in royal London to pay a debt she had to borrow forty shillings from her father's shepherd.
Allusion

117 Pg. 200

You mean the will.
That has been explained, I believe, by jurists.
She was entitled to her widow's dower
At common law. His legal knowledge was great
Our judges tell us.

Allusion—*Shakespeare's Will*

118 Pg. 200-1

And therefore he left out her name
From the first draft but he did not leave out
The presents for his granddaughter, for his daughters,
For his sister, for his old cronies in Stratford
And in London. And therefore when he was urged,
As I believe, to name her
He left her his
Secondbest
Bed.

Punkt

Leftherhis
Secondbest
Bestabed
Secabest
Leftabed.

Allusion

119 Pg. 201 He was a rich country gentleman, Stephen said, with a coat of arms and landed estate at Stratford and a house in Ireland yard, a capitalist shareholder, a bill promoter, a tithefarmer. Why did he not leave her his best bed if he wished her to snore away the rest of her nights in peace?

Allusion

120 Pg. 201 William Shakespeare and company, limited. The people's William. For terms apply: E. Dowden, Highfield house. . . .

Allusion

121 Pg. 202 I asked him what he thought of the charge of pederasty brought against the bard. He lifted his hands and said: *All we can say is that life ran very high in those days.* Lovely!

Allusion

122 Pg. 202 He drew Shylock out of his own long pocket.

Allusion

123 Pg. 202 His borrowers are no doubt those divers of worship mentioned by Chettle Falstaff who reported his uprightness of dealing.

Allusion—Henry Chettle's preface to *Kind-Hart's Dreame*

124 Pg. 202 He sued a fellowplayer for the price of a few bags of malt and exacted his pound of flesh in interest for every money lent. How else could Aubrey's ostler and callboy get rich quick?

Allusion

125 Pg. 202 Shylock chimes with the jewbaiting that followed the hanging and quartering of the queen's leech Lopez, ...

Allusion

126 Pg. 202 . . . *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* with the coming to the throne of a Scotch philosophaster . . . . .

Allusion

127 Pg. 202 The lost armada is his jeer in *Love's Labour Lost.*

Love's Labour's Lost IV. i. 101

128 Pg. 202 . . . and we have a porter's theory of equivocation.
Macbeth II. iii. 1-24
Macbeth V. v. 43

129 Pg. 202 . . . Patsy Caliban, . . .
Allusion—*The Tempest*

130 Pg. 202 The sugared sonnets follow Sydney's.
Allusion

131 Pg. 202 Bess, the gross virgin who inspired *The Merry Wives of Windsor* . . .
Allusion

132 Pg. 203 Coleridge called him myriadminded.
Critical Allusion

133 Pg. 203 . . . . . with hoops of steel.
Hamlet I. iii. 63

134 Pg. 203 Gentle Will is being roughly handled, ...
Allusion

135 Pg. 203 . . . . . for poor Ann, Will's widow, ...
Allusion

136 Pg. 203 . . . . . in that secondbest bed, ...
Allusion—*Shakespeare's Will*

137 Pg. 203 . . . . . the mobled queen, ...
Hamlet II. ii. 533, 534

138 Pg. 204 . . . . . (one stayed at New Place . . . . .)
Allusion

139 Pg. 204 . . . . . preferring them to the *Merry Wives* . . . . .
Allusion

140 Pg. 204 Falstaff was not a family man. I feel that the fat knight is his supreme creation.
Allusion—*The Life of King Henry the Fifth* IV. vii. 51

141 Pg. 204 . . . . . a greying man with two marriageable daughters, ...
Allusion

142 Pg. 204 . . . . . beardless undergraduate from Wittemberg then you must hold that his seventy year old mother is the lustful queen.
Allusion—*Hamlet*

143 Pg. 204 The corpse of John Shakespeare does not walk the night.
Allusion

144 Pg. 204 From hour to hour it rots and rots.
Paraphrase—*As You Like It* II. vii. 27

145 Pg. 205 When Rutlandbaconsouthamptonshakespeare or another poet of the same name in the comedy of errors wrote *Hamlet* . . . .
Allusion

146 Pg. 206 The play's the thing!
Hamlet II. ii. 641

147 Pg. 206 As for his family, Stephen said, his mother's name lives in the forest of Arden. Her death brought from him the scene with Volumnia in *Coriolanus.* His boyson's death is the deathscene of young Arthur in *King John.* Hamlet, the black prince, is Hamnet Shakespeare. Who the girls in *The Tempest,* in *Pericles,* in *Winter's Tale* are we know. Who Cleopatra, fleshpot of Egypt, and Cressid and Venus are we may guess.
Allusions

148 Pg. 206 He had three brothers, Gilbert, Edmund, Richard.
Allusion—*Shakespeare's Brothers*

149 Pg. 206 . . . . . Maister Wull the playwriter up in Lunnon . . .
Allusion

150 Pg. 206 . . . . but an Edmund and a Richard are recorded in the works of sweet William.

Allusion

151 Pg. 206 What's in a name?

Romeo and Juliet II. ii. 43

152 Pg. 207 In his trinity of black Wills, the villain shakebags, Iago, Richard Crookback Edmund in *King Lear,* two bear the wicked uncles' names. Nay, that last play was written or being written while his brother Edmund lay dying in Southwark.

Allusion

153 Pg. 207 I hope Edmund is going to catch it. I don't want Richard, my name . . . . .

Allusion

154 Pg. 207 But he that filches from one my good name . . . . .

Othello III. iii. 159

155 Pg. 207 He has hidden his own name, a fair name, William, in the plays, a super here, a clown there, ...

Allusion

156 Pg. 207 He has revealed it in the sonnets where there is Will in overplus.

Sonnet CXXXV, 2

157 Pg. 207 Like John O'Gaunt, his name is dear to him, as dear as the coat of arms he toadied for, on a bend sable a spear or steeled argent, honorificabilitudinitatibus, dearer than his glory of greatest shakescene in the country.

Allusion—*Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*

158 Pg. 207 What's in a name?

Romeo and Juliet II. ii. 43

159 Pg. 207 . . . . . returning from Shottery and from her arms.

Allusion

160 Pg. 208 The three brothers Shakespeare.

Allusion

161 Pg. 208 Let us hear what you have to say of Richard and Edmund.

Allusion

162 Pg. 208 . . . . . those two noble kinsmen nuncle Richie and nuncle Edmund, ...

163 Pg. 209 My kingdom for a drink.

Parody—*The Tragedy of King Richard the Third* V. iv. 7, 13

164 Pg. 209 You will say those names were already in the chronicles from which he took the stuff of his plays. Why did he take them rather than others? Richard, a whoreson crookback, misbegotten, makes love to a widowed Ann (what's in a name?), woos and wins her, a whoreson merry widow. Richard the conqueror, third brother, came after William the conquered. The other four acts of that play hang limply from that first. Of all his kings Richard is the only kind unshielded by Shakespeare's reverence, the angel of the world.

Allusion—*The Tragedy of King Richard the Third*

165 Pg. 209 Why is the underplot of *King Lear* in which Edmund figures lifted out of Sidney's *Arcadia* and spatchocked on to a Celtic legend older than history?

Allusion

166 Pg. 209 That was Will's way, . . .

Allusion

167 Pg. 209 He puts Bohemia on the seacoast and makes Ulysses quote Aristotle.
Allusions—*The Winter's Tale* and *Troilus and Cressida*

168 Pg. 209 Because the theme of the false or the usurping or the adulterous brother or all three in one is to Shakespeare what the poor is not, always with him.
Allusion

169 Pg. 209 The note of banishment, banishment from the heart, banishment from home, sounds uninterruptedly from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* onward till Prospero breaks his staff, buries it certain fathoms in the earth and drowns his book. It doubles itself in the middle of his life, reflects itself in another, repeats itself, protasis, epitasis, catastasis, catastrophe. It repeats itself again when he is near the grave, when his married daughter Susan, chip of the old block, is accused of adultery. But it was the original sin that darkened his understanding, weakened his will and left in him a strong inclination to evil. The words are those of my lords bishops of Maynooth: an original sin and, like original sin, committed by another in whose sin he too has sinned. It is between the lines of his last written words, it is petrified on his tombstone under which her four bones are not to be laid.
Allusions

170 Pg. 209 Age has not withered it.
Paraphrase—*Antony and Cleopatra* II. ii. 243

171 Pg. 209 It is in infinite variety everywhere in the world he has created, in *Much Ado about Nothing,* twice in *As you like It,* in the *Tempest,* in *Hamlet* in *Measure for Measure,* and in all the other plays which I have not read.
infinite variety—*Antony and Cleopatra* II. ii. 244
Allusion

172 Pg. 210 He is the ghost and the prince. He is all in all.
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. ii. 187

173 Pg. 210 The boy of act one is the mature man of act five. All in all. In *Cymbeline,* in *Othello* he is bawd and cuckold. He acts and is acted on. Lover of an ideal or a perversion, like José he kills the real Carmen. His unremitting intellect is the hornmad Iago ceaselessly willing that the moor in him shall suffer.
Allusion

174 Pg. 210 And what a character is Iago! . . .
Allusion—*Othello*

175 Pg. 210 After God Shakespeare has created most.
Critical Allusion

176 Pg. 210 Man delights him not nor woman neither, ...
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* II. ii. 329-330

177 Pg. 210 He returns after a life of absence to that spot of earth where he was born, where he has always been, man and boy, a silent witness and there, his journey of life ended, he plants his mulberry-tree in the earth. Then dies. The motion is ended. Gravediggers bury Hamlet *père* and Hamlet *fils.* A king and a prince at last in death, with incidental music. And, what though murdered and betrayed, bewept by all frail tender hearts for, Dane or Dubliner, sorrow for the dead is the only husband for whom they refuse to be divorced.
Allusion

178 Pg. 210 If you like the epilogue look long on it: prosperous Prospero, the good man rewarded, Lizzie, grandpa's lump of love, and nuncle Richie, the bad man taken off by poetic justice to the place where the bad niggers go.

Allusions

179 Pg. 210 Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love. But always meeting ourselves. The playwright who wrote the folio of this world and wrote it badly (He gave us light first and the sun two days later), the lord of things as they are whom the most Roman of catholics call *dio boia,* hangman god, is doubtless all in all in all of us, ostler and butcher, and would be bawd and cuckold too but that in the economy of heaven, foretold by Hamlet, there are no more marriages, glorified man, an androgynous angel, being a wife unto himself.

Allusions
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* III. i. 156

(. . . we will have no more marriages; . . .)
Allusion—*Hamlet* II. ii. 323-329

180 Pg. 211 Those who are married, ... all save one, shall live. The rest shall keep as they are.

Paraphrase—*Hamlet* III. i. 156-158

181 Pg. 211 Unwed, unfancied, ware of wiles, they fingerponder nightly each his variorum edition of *The Taming of the Shrew.*

Allusion

182 Pg. 211 Dowden believes there is some mystery in *Hamlet* but will say no more.

Critical Allusion

183 Pg. 211 Herr Bleibtreu, the man Piper met in Berlin, who is working up that Rutland theory, believes that the secret is hidden in the Stratford monument. He is going to visit the present duke, Piper says, and prove to him that his ancestor wrote the plays.

Allusion

184 Pg. 212 Item: was Hamlet mad?

Allusion

185 Pg. 213 Forgot: any more than he forgot the whipping lousy Lucy gave him. And left the *femme de trente ans.* And why no other children born? And his first child a girl?

Allusion

186 Pg. 213 Puck Mulligan footed featly, trilling:

Paraphrase—*The Tempest* I. ii. 379
Allusion—*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*

187 Pg. 215 Peace of the druid priests of Cymbeline, hierophantic: from wide earth an altar.

Allusion

188 Pg. 216 . . . . . cardinal Wolsey's words: *If I had served my God as I had served my king He would not have abandoned me in my old days.*

Paraphrase—*The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* III. ii. 456-8

189 Pg. 238 You are right, sir. A Monday morning, 'twas so, indeed.
Hamlet II. ii. 415-416

190 Pg. 243 I'll say there is much kindness in the jew, ...
The Merchant of Venice I. iii. 154

191 Pg. 245 O, but you missed Dedalus on *Hamlet.*
Allusion

192 Pg. 245 Shakespeare is the happy hunting ground of all minds that have lost their balance.
Allusion

193 Pg. 268 Sweets to the.
Allusion—*Hamlet* V. i. 265

194 Pg. 268 Wise child that knows her father, ...
Paraphrase—*The Merchant of Venice* II. ii. 83-84

195 Pg. 276 Music hath charms Shakespeare said. Quotations every day in the year.
Allusion

196 Pg. 276 To be or not to be. Wisdom while you wait.
Hamlet III. i. 56

197 Pg. 292 . . . . . Cleopatra, ... Julius Caesar, ... Patrick W. Shakespeare, ...
Allusions

198 Pg. 315 A fellow that's neither fish nor flesh.
(she's neither fish nor flesh; . . . . .)
The First Part of King Henry the Fourth III. iii. 143

199 Pg. 320 Frailty, thy name is *Sceptre.*
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. ii. 146

200 Pg. 323 'Tis a custom more honoured in the breach than in the observance.
Hamlet I. iv. 15-16

201 Pg. 327 He's a nice pattern of a Romeo and Juliet.
Allusion

202 Pg. 340 Many a time and oft . . . . .
The Merchant of Venice I. iii. 107

203 Pg. 349 . . . . . a ministering angel . . . . .
Hamlet V. i. 263

204 Pg. 349 . . . . . halcyon days . . . . .
The First Part of King Henry the Sixth I. ii. 131

205 Pg. 351-2 . . . . . more sinned against than sinning, ...
King Lear III. ii. 60

206 Pg. 358 . . . . . cruel only to be kind.
Hamlet III. iv. 178

207 Pg. 366 For this relief much thanks. In *Hamlet,* that is.
Hamlet I. i. 8

208 Pg. 381 And childe Leopold did up his beaver . . . . .
Parody—*Hamlet* I. ii. 229

209 Pg. 387 . . . . . it will go hard but thou wilt have the second best bed.
Allusion—*Shakespeare's Will*

210 Pg. 387 . . . . . and Hamlet his father showeth the prince no blister of combustion.
Allusion

211 Pg. 400 . . . . . like a crookback teethed and feet first into the world, ...
Henry VI. Pt. III. V. vii. 70-80

212 Pg. 401 'Slife, I'll be round with you.
Paraphrase—*Twelfth-Night* II. iii. 103

213 Pg. 405 For this relief much thanks.
Hamlet I. i. 8

214 Pg. 406 The wise father knows his own child.
The Merchant of Venice II. ii. 83-84

215 Pg. 412 . . . . . must certainly, in the poet's words, give us pause.
Allusion—*Hamlet* III. i. 68

216 Pg. 413 . . . . . the whirligig of years . . . . .
Paraphrase—*Twelfth-Night* V. i. 388-389

217 Pg. 425 We have shrewridden Shakespeare and henpecked Socrates.
Allusion

218 Pg. 436 Othello black brute.
Allusion

219 Pg. 438 The witching hour of night.
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* III. ii. 413

220 Pg. 439 Trenchant exponent of Shakespeare.
Allusion

221 Pg. 464 [Bloom, I am Paddy Dignam's spirit.] List, list, O list!
Hamlet I. v. 22

222 Pg. 482 Caliban!
The Tempest I. ii. 313

223 Pg. 482 This is midsummer madness, ...
(Why, this is very midsummer madness.)
Twelfth-Night III. iv. 62

224 Pg. 483 . . . . . more sinned against than sinning.
King Lear III. ii. 60

225 Pg. 489 To be or not to be.
Hamlet III. i. 56

226 Pg. 490 The greeneyed monster.
Othello III. iii. 166

227 Pg. 494 God, the sun, Shakespeare, a commercial traveller, having itself traversed in reality itself, becomes that self.
Allusion

228 Pg. 531 Swear!
Hamlet I. v. 149, 155, 161, 180, 181

229 Pg. 531 You have made your secondbest bed. . . . . Your epitaph is written.
Allusion

230 Pg. 534 Frailty, thy name is marriage.
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. ii. 146

231 Pg. 535 Halcyon days.
The First Part of King Henry the Sixth I. ii. 131

232 Pg. 542 To have or not to have, that is the question.
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* III. i. 56

233 Pg. 546 The beast that has two backs . . .
Paraphrase—*Othello* I. i. 118, cf. No. 30

234 Pg. 547 Hamlet, I am thy father's gimlet!
Paraphrase—*Hamlet* I. v. 9

235 Pg. 553 The mirror up to nature.
Hamlet III. ii. 26

236 Pg. 553 *(. . . . . The face of William Shakespeare, beardless, appears there, ...)*
Allusion

237 Pg. 554 SHAKESPEARE
(With paralytic rage.) Weda seca whokilla farst.
Allusion

238 Pg. 554 *(. . . refeatures Shakespeare's beardless face.)*
Allusion

239 Pg. 556 . . . . . *pièce de Shakespeare.*
Allusion

240 Pg. 576 Absinthe, the greeneyed monster.
Othello III. iii. 166

241 Pg. 579 Hamlet, revenge!
Allusion

242 Pg. 597 But how to get there was the rub.
Echo—*Hamlet*

243 Pg. 598 O tell me where is fancy bread?
Parody—*The Merchant of Venice* III. ii. 63

244 Pg. 607 Shakespeares were as common as Murphies. What's in a name?
Allusion and *Romeo and Juliet* II. ii. 43

245 Pg. 611 That was the rub.
Echo—*Hamlet* III. i. 65

246 Pg. 618 . . . . . it's a horse of quite another colour . . . . .
Paraphrase—*Twelfth-Night* II. iii. 184-185

247 Pg. 618 . . . . or it's the big question of our national poet over again, who precisely wrote them, like *Hamlet* and Bacon, as you who know your Shakespeare infinitely better than I, . . .
Critical Allusion

248 Pg. 620 . . . . . the Antonio personage (no relation to the dramatic personage of identical name who sprang from the pen of our national poet) . . . . .
Allusion

249 Pg. 621 . . . . . and give you your quietus . . . . .
Echo—*Hamlet* III. i. 75

250 Pg. 625 . . . . . that consummation devoutly to be or not to be wished for, ...
Echo—*Hamlet* III. i. 63-64

251 Pg. 645-6 . . . . . launched out into praises of Shakespeare's songs, . . .
Allusion

252 Pg. 652 To enter or not to enter. To knock or not to knock.
Parody—*Hamlet* III. i. 56

253 Pg. 661 . . . . he reflected on the pleasures derived from literature of instruction rather than of amusement as he himself had applied to the works of William Shakespeare more than once for the solution of difficult problems in imaginary or real life.
Allusion

254 Pg. 674 On the stage, modern or Shakespearean: exemplars, Charles Wyndham, high comedian, Osmond Tearle (†1901), exponent of Shakespeare.
Allusion

255 Pg. 685 . . . . . about the period of the birth of William Shakespeare . . . . .
Allusion

256 Pg. 693 Shakespeare's *Works* (dark crimson morocco, goldtooled).
Allusion

References

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Shakespeare, William, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare,* edited by W. J. Craig, M.A., Oxford University Press, London, 1922.

Editor's Note—Mr. Heine and the Editor are grateful for the labors of Dr. Carl Strauch and Miss Eleanor Ritter with Mr. Heine's manuscript and for their additions to it.

PRODUCTIONS OF *HAMLET*, 1930 TO THE PRESENT

(This is exclusive of all amateur productions and is necessarily limited to major presentations in London and the United States, with mention of only a few foreign productions of the play.)

1930—Embassy Theatre, London—Gerald Lawrence as Hamlet
Queen's Theatre, Old Vic, London—John Gielgud as Hamlet
Globe Theatre, London—German version by W. V. Schlegel
Haymarket Theatre, London—Produced by Henry Ainley
Hampden Theatre, New York—Walter Hampden as Hamlet

1931—Royale Theatre, New York—Fritz Leiber as Hamlet, with the Chicago Civic Shakespeare Society
Haymarket Theatre, London—Godfrey Tearle as Hamlet
Broadhurst Theatre, New York—Raymond Massey as Hamlet, produced by Norman-Bel Geddes

1932—New Century Theatre, New York—Shakespeare Theatre Company
Marlowe Society, London

1933—Old Vic, London
Pasadena Playhouse, California

1934—Belasco Theatre, Los Angeles, William Thornton as Hamlet
Shubert Theatre, Newark, New Jersey
New Theatre, London—John Gielgud as Hamlet
Forty-fourth Street Theatre, New York—Walter Hampden as Hamlet

1935—Old Vic, London—Maurice Evans as Hamlet
London—John Gielgud as Hamlet

1936—Empire Theatre, New York—John Gielgud as Hamlet (then on tour)
Imperial Theatre, New York—Leslie Howard as Hamlet

1937—Old Vic, London—Laurence Olivier as Hamlet

Westminster Theatre, London—Christopher Oldham as Hamlet

Shakespeare Festival, Stratford-on-Avon

1938—Old Vic, London—In modern dress

St. James Theatre, New York—Maurice Evans as Hamlet

1939—Maurice Evans production moves to Boston; plays again Forty-fourth Street Theatre, New York—December, 1939

1942—Robert Helpman Ballet, Sadler's Wells Company, New Theatre, London

1943—Geary Theatre, San Francisco—John Carradine as Hamlet

1944—Haymarket Theatre, London—John Gielgud as Hamlet

New Theatre, London—Robert Helpman as Hamlet.

Shakespeare Festival, Stratford-on-Avon—Robert Atkins as Hamlet

Old Vic, London

Hawaii—Servicemen—Maurice Evans, G.I. Version

1945—International Theatre, New York—Maurice Evans as Hamlet, in his G.I. Version

Tom Rutherford as Hamlet, on tour in U. S. and Canada

Haymarket Theatre, London

1948—Shakespeare Festival, Stratford-on-Avon

Foreign Productions:

1932—Vakhtangov Theatre, Moscow

Comedie Francaise, Paris

1934—Tokyo

1937—Kronberg Castle, Elsinore, Denmark—Laurence Olivier as Hamlet, with the Old Vic.

1939—Kronberg Castle, Elsinore, Denmark — John Gielgud as Hamlet

Royal Theatre of Greece

1947—Kronberg Castle, Elsinore, Denmark

(EDITOR'S NOTE—The Editor is grateful to Miss Anna M. Sturmer, of Kansas State College, and to Mr. Arthur Heine for their help in the compiling of this list.)

QUARTERLY REVIEWS

WALKER'S "THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT"

By Irving T. Richards

IN *The Time Is Out of Joint*[1] Roy Walker poises Hamlet between two worlds: the sinful physical world, "the world of appearances," symbolized by Claudius; and the pure spiritual world, "the unseen world," symbolized by the Ghost. Sometimes the latter is symbolized by night's mysteries or the freedom of the open air; sometimes the former by garish day or inconsistently by dark night. Symbolism, indeed, runs rampant in the work. This trait, and also that of deliberate misapplication of quotations to uses not inappropriate but by no means sanctioned in their original context, is illustrated in the following quotation:

> The slaying of Polonius is the counterpart of the sparing of Claudius at his prayers. Eavesdropping is an act with no relish of salvation in it; Lucianus strikes hoping to send his adversary's soul to hell. Man, by nature so like a god, is hidden behind the false curtain of appearances. Hamlet's higher nature has no impulse to hold back his hand. There leaps to his mind the spy behind the arras when he talked with Ophelia. The almost demented sorrow and pain of that encounter, the renewed faith in his duty to kill Claudius, the impassioned desire to pierce these smiling, damned surfaces and transfix the unseen corruption that is mining all within, like a rat in the wall gnawing inexorably at the rafters, compel the stroke. And Polonius meets his fitting end. Unable to see through the curtain of appearances behind which he has cleverly concealed himself he does not see the reality of death rushing upon him. His reunion with reality is the agony of the sword in his heart. (p. 102)

[1]Andrew Dakars Limited, London, 1948, p. 157.

Mr. Walker seems not to have made the mistake of attributing madness to Hamlet, but finds him at times on the "borderlands of madness." No allusion is made to Hamlet's admonition that he may "think meet / To put an antic disposition on," but the quotation is somewhat ludicrously cut off just at that point (p. 38). Instead, all Hamlet's feigned insanity, including even his humorous horseplay with Polonius and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, is rationalized as heavenly insight. All abnormal behavior, including Ophelia's madness, which Mr. Walker recognizes as such, is attributed to other-worldliness, to spiritual insight. Thus no line is drawn either between sanity and insanity, actual or feigned, or between solemnity and absurdity. All is solemn analysis of the conflict between spiritual perfection and worldly corruption. Hamlet, sired by spiritual perfection upon mundane frailty, is represented as in the end redeemed from base purpose of revenge to become Christ-like, "heaven's scourge and minister."

In his treatment of other roles also, Mr. Walker, mingling real insight with overemphasis of theory, has done violence and misinterpreted action. Claudius becomes evil incarnate, whose vile nature has infected all Denmark, debasing the susceptible characters of Gertrude, Polonius, and Laertes. Ophelia, carrying out the will of her father—largely in extra-textual action,—is mistakenly thought by Hamlet to have exhibited in herself the evil nature of her father and Claudius and drives him to doubt the evidence of his senses, with regard to both her purity and the virtuous authenticity of the Ghost. Mr. Walker is aided in his misinterpretations by considerable rearrangement of parts of the play for purposes of his discussion.

Yet strangely, this oblique view of the play, which throws much of it out of focus, reveals forcefully certain realities of character, such as Hamlet's spiritual integrity, Polonius's diplomatic worldliness, and Ophelia's innocent purity. Even Claudius, here the very symbol of evil, is still recognized as having a conscience that causes him to suffer and regret—"Claudius is an evil spirit, not a monstrosity unaware of his own evil but a man of vision who has submitted to corruption for the sake of worldly power" (p. 132).

The play is unquestionably concerned with the universal conflict of good and evil, and though Mr. Walker's mystic view tends to eliminate everything else from it and thus represent it only remotely and in a single phase, his strong insight into character is coupled with

a charmingly deceptive plausibility of argument and style. As a stimulating off-center approach to the play and its characters, his book may have merit. Its very absurdities compel one to look at action and characters from a new standpoint. Though his character interpretations are not new, they are for the most part better than that: despite the bizarre light in which they are often cast, they are basically sound. He has, however, seriously obfuscated much of the action, such as Hamlet's feigned madness, his early doubt of the identity of the Ghost, and the intellectual duel between him and Claudius. And of course Mr. Walker sees the great "To be, or not to be" soliloquy as a contemplation of suicide. The book views Shakespeare's play from a cloudy and mystic distance, and though this new perspective throws some aspects of it into sharp relief, it at the same time badly obscures others. This can hardly be the way Shakespeare saw it all.

Cambridge Junior College.

MADARIAGA'S "ON HAMLET"

By J. DUNCAN SPAETH

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA'S *On Hamlet*[1] presents Shakespeare's most fascinating and "questionable" character as mirrored in the mind of a Spaniard whose essays on Wordsworth and Shelley, as well as his professorship at Oxford lend prestige to his literary opinions. The book is dedicated to his daughters as "an offering to the poet their mother's country has given to the world" and is the fruit of studies incident to the translation of Hamlet into Spanish. Having listened to Madariaga on Hamlet, one would like to hear Hamlet on Madariaga. His essay, in its protest against what he terms the "sentimental falsification of Hamlet" is a symptom of the modern reaction from Tennysonian idylls to Stracheyan innuendoes at queens and queenliness, sentiment and soulfulness. Having criticized Bradley for "preconceiving Hamlet with a soul so pure and noble," he preconceives a Hamlet whose psychological backbone

[1]London, Hollis and Carter, 1948, 130 pp.

(sic) is that of a Borgian and Machiavellian ego-centric, interested only in the urges of his own Ego.

Now Shakespeare, as Boas long ago remarked, has portrayed in many of his characters—Constance, in King John, Romeo, Richard II—the sentimentalist whose emotional self-indulgence projects a painted mist between himself and reality, between things as he wishes to see them and things as they are. Even Brutus, who immediately precedes Hamlet fails in action because he is a wishful thinker. But while Shakespeare recognizes this as a tragic fault, he always presents his ego-centrics sympathetically and with redeeming traits. Madariaga ignores Shakespeare's uniform practice of awaking sympathy for his tragic protagonist at the end of the play. The poet's redeeming word is "noble." Of Brutus, "This was the noblest Roman of them all." Of Mark Antony, "The greatest prince o' the world, the noblest." Of Cleopatra, "He words me that I should not be noble to myself." Of Othello, "For he was great of heart," and of Hamlet, "Now cracks a noble heart." Madariaga's Hamlet is no tragic character, but comes near being the villain of the play. We are warned not to take at face value his opinion of Claudius and are told that in the prayer scene Claudius proves himself a better Christian than Hamlet. Poor Hamlet had no murder or incest to confess and this gives the king an advantage over him as a Christian. The truth is, of course, that Hamlet was no "believer," but the eternal human doubter, voicing the mind and mood of his creator, standing on the edge of the known, peering into the Beyond, casting his plummet into the deep, and reporting "no soundings."

In spite of his cavalier attitude toward the historical scholars, Madariaga relies more on "sources" than on the evidence in the play, particularly in his treatment of the Hamlet-Ophelia relationship. He quotes the confused and conflicting reports in Saxo and Belleforest to prove that Hamlet and Ophelia had been in "intimate relations" before the play began. Hamlet never loved Ophelia, he was merely amorous, a typically Latin interpretation of Amour. This is quite in tune with Iago's opinion of the relation between Othello and Desdemona, "Virtue a fig." "Hamlet is by no means that delicate soul that would sigh his pure and lily-white soul under his lady's window. He is rather a full-blooded and foul-mouthed man." Which reminds me of Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" where peeping

Thomas spies on brother Lawrence watering his damned flower pots,

> (He-he! There his lily snaps!)
> Saint, forsooth, while brown Dolores
> Squats outside the convent bank.

This study combines with literal fidelity to the text of Hamlet, a total want of insight into Shakespeare's fundamental valuations of human nature, especially his awareness of the conflict between appearance and reality, between outward show and inner worth. Thus it misses the significance of Hamlet's

> Seems, Madam, nay it is, I know not seems.

Madariaga's only comment on this key-note speech is: "A young, strong and courageous man such as he was need not have taken his father's death in the mournful way he does in addressing his mother." Fatuousness could no farther go.

The attention given to this book is not justified by any contribution of value it makes to scholarly criticism, but rather by the appeal it will make "to the general." It voices the iconoclastic mood of much modern thinking which attempts to correct sentimental by cynical falsification. Critical scholarship is surely right in recognizing that Shakespeare's "freedom of creative genius" was frequently limited by the machinery of the plot which he inherited, and which he did not feel free fundamentally to alter. The very discrepancies discoverable by a microscopic analysis are responsible for the multitudinous and mutually conflicting interpretations, such as no other one of Shakespeare's characters has inspired.

Whatever Hamlet failed to achieve, he has succeeded in disclosing the minds of his interpreters. No other play has so stimulated self-revelation, and challenged actor, spectator, reader, and critic at their deepest levels. When we recall the contributions of Señor de Madariaga to international understanding, his active participation in the League of Nations, and his consequent disillusionment, there is deep significance in his characterization of Shakespeare as "an observer of life, *feeling himself very much out of it,* mentally in sympathy, perhaps in unity with all that pageantry which turns into a river of colour the paltry tale told by an idiot, which human history really is." This has the ring of sincerity. Only if you want to report Shakespeare's final

outlook on life, it were better to quote Prospero than Macbeth. Though in his opening page Madariaga praises Shakespeare for being above the strife, and chastises with the valor of his tongue all who would discover in Hamlet the image of his maker, though he assures us that Shakespeare's creatures are alive "precisely because they evade all labels," he then proceeds to clap *his* label on Hamlet, and ends by calling Shakespeare "The Hamlet of Parnassus, and Hamlet the Shakespeare of the stage." If this be rashness on his part, praised be rashness for it. Our indiscretions sometimes serve us most.

Princeton University. (Emeritus)

NOTES AND COMMENT

Mrs. Robert Carlton Morris's services for a life time to the cause of Shakespeare and her efforts as Contributing Editor of *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin* may be fittingly memorialized in this issue, which begins our endeavors for the New Year. She sends the following notes.

Prevented by law from entering the teaching profession because of deafness since childhood, she has succeeded nevertheless as a teacher in spreading the "good news" of Shakespeare throughout her native state of Ohio and the Middle West. Now under the additional handicap of age, she still goes about stimulating the Shakespeare groups she has fostered for many years.

The *Stratford Shakespeare Class,* a group organized by Mrs. Morris, recently opened its forty-first year with the study of *Hamlet* in anticipation of attending Sir Laurence Olivier's motion-picture. She also attended the twenty-fifth anniversary of a similar group in Marion, Ohio. Adult groups also continue in Waterville and in Napoleon, Ohio.

The Shakespeare Club in Bowling Green, Ohio, patronized by the faculty of Bowling Green College, has functioned for forty-five years, establishing a public library in the town long before the state college came there.

The new year-book of the Shakespeare Club in Tomah, Wisconsin, reveals their entrance upon their fifty-fourth season.

The Shakespeare Clubs of Toledo have served in presenting to the Toledo Public Library a model of the Globe Theatre after that in the Folger Shakespeare Library at Washington, and in helping the Toledo Museum of Art to buy their Second Folio. The city of Cleveland has been noted for its beautiful Shakespeare Garden mentioned in Gunther's *Inside U. S. A.*

For nearly fifty years Mrs. Morris has been collecting book titles derived from the Bible and Shakespeare. She has in her files one

hundred and forty from *Hamlet* alone and about one thousand taken from Shakespeare, most of them from the tragedies.

In 1916 Mrs. Morris promoted a world-wide movement on the ter-centenary of Shakespeare's death for planting memorial trees. Some thousand trees were planted in Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, England, Canada, France, Australia, etc., the campaign being financed by a bookplate designed by Mrs. Morris and purchased in large quantities by universities, high schools, grade schools, clubs, towns, individuals, and collectors.

The Shakespeare Association congratulates Mrs. Morris on her life-long endeavors to promote the cause of Shakespeare. It will be glad to hear of the activities of other regional Shakespeare groups in America.

Now in its thirty-second year, The Shakespeare Society of Washington has opened with lectures by Dr. F. S. Tupper, of George Washington University, and by Dr. James G. McManaway, of Folger Shakespeare Library. The President of the Club, Dr. E. V. Wilcox, reports that the regular dramatic production which is given each year in cooperation with the American University, will be presented sometime in May; this year's selection is *The Tempest.* Also on the schedule are vocal renderings of the lyrics, and addresses by Dr. Natalie White and Dr. George Winchester Stone, Jr., both of George Washington University.

A lecture course in Shakespeare by a veteran and much-loved professor at Columbia University, John H. H. Lyon, will be offered by the Institute of Arts and Sciences of Columbia in ten weekly lectures beginning early in February. The course is designed to appeal to the mature person who wants to "get into Shakespeare"—not the Shakespeare of textual scholarship and criticism, but the essential Shakespeare as he is revealed in his plays.

Professor Lyon has long been active as a member and officer in the Shakespeare Association of America and has taught for more than a score of years at Columbia. His classes in the School of General Studies have been popular among adult students because of his rare quality of being both a scholar and a lively interpreter of Shakespeare.